

CONSUMER VALUE CREATED BY AUDIENCE DEVELOPMENT IN THEATRE ORGANISATIONS

Master's Thesis
Veera Ala-Kaila
Aalto University School of Business
International Business Design Management
Fall 2019

Author Veera Ala-Kaila		
Title of thesis Consumer value created by audience development in theatre organisations		
Degree MSc in Economics and Business Administration		
Degree programme International Design Business Management		
Thesis advisor(s) Miikka J. Lehtonen		
Year of approval 2019	Number of pages 78	Language English

Abstract

Culture is an important part of our society, enriching people's lives and deepening their understanding of the world around them. However, many cultural organisations depend on subsidies in being able to operate the way they do. The parties behind the subsidies require cultural organisations to do audience development – different events and activities that allow people to experience culture in different ways. Existing publications on audience development mainly focus on the artistic or organisational rather than consumer point of view. That is why this study was conducted to examine what value participating in audience development activities create for consumers in the theatre industry. The research data has been collected through Helsinki City Theatre. Since the purpose of the research is to understand what kind of value audience development creates for consumers, the case and data is qualitative. Interviews were conducted with participants from audience development activities. Each activity was also observed to deeper understand the interviewees.

Research findings indicate that audience development generates value to participants through co-creation experiences, learning and brand relationship. The first two are transmitted to the participant or consumer directly from audience development activities, but also indirectly by providing added value to the traditional theatre experience. All of these have an impact on the brand, which then again affects the relationship between the participant and the organisation. Building and nurturing this relationship is valuable for most participants, and they are eager to feel even closer to the theatre organisation. Value creation between the theatre organisation and a participant is a two-way interaction, although many theories describe it strictly from an organisational point of view.

The findings of this study support existing literature in stating that audience development broadens experiences of theatre for consumers. The main value for organisations, building customer relationships and loyal customers, is also visible as the brand relationship dimension. However, although co-creation is a way for the consumers to emerge themselves into the theatre experience, there is little theory supporting the process from a theatre organisation's point of view. Overall, the findings help in pointing out aspects that are not yet present in existing theories about audience development, such as learning and co-creation. The findings can also be applied to other cultural sectors, but it is important to be aware of the possible differences between different fields.

Keywords audience development, theater, culture, co-creation, outreach, value creation

Tekijä Veera Ala-Kaila

Työn nimi Yleisötyön luoma arvo kuluttajille teatteriorganisaatioissa

Tutkinto Kauppatieteiden maisteri

Koulutusohjelma International Design Business Management

Työn ohjaaja(t) Miikka J. Lehtonen

Hyväksymisvuosi 2019

Sivumäärä 78

Kieli Englanti

Tiivistelmä

Kulttuuri on tärkeä osa yhteiskuntaamme. Monet kulttuuriorganisaatiot ovat kuitenkin riippuvaisia erilaisista rahallisista tuista voidakseen rahoittaa toimintansa. Tukijana toimivat osapuolet vaativat, että kulttuuriorganisaatiot tekevät yleisötyötä tavoittaakseen mahdollisimman suuren osan väestöstä. Yleisötyö on erilaisia aktiviteetteja ja tapahtumia, joissa osallistujilla on mahdollisuus kokea kulttuuria eri tavoin. Olemassa olevat julkaisut keskittyvät pääosin tutkimaan yleisötyötä joko taiteellisesta tai organisaation näkökulmasta. Siksi tämä tutkimus keskittyy tarkentamaan, mitä arvoa yleisötyö tuottaa nimenomaan kuluttajille. Tutkimusdata on kerätty yhteistyössä Helsingin Kaupunginteatterin kanssa. Koska tutkimuksen tavoite on ymmärtää luotua arvoa kuluttajanäkökulmasta, kerätty data on kvalitatiivista. Yleisötyöaktiviteettien osallistujia haastateltiin, ja kyseisiä aktiviteetteja myös havainnoitiin tiedon keräämiseksi.

Tutkimustulokset osoittavat, että yleisötyö luo arvoa kuluttajille kolmessa muodossa: yhteiskehittelyn, oppimisen ja brändisuhteen. Ensimmäiset kaksi välittyvät osallistujille suoraan yleisötyöaktiviteeteissa, mutta myös epäsuorasti lisäarvona perinteisessä teatterikokemuksessa. Kaikki tämä vaikuttaa brändiin, joka puolestaan vaikuttaa osallistujan ja teatteriorganisaation väliseen suhteeseen. Tämän suhteen rakentaminen on arvokasta useimmille kuluttajille, ja he ovat innokkaita muodostamaan läheisemmän suhteen teatteriorganisaation kanssa. Arvon tuottaminen teatterin ja kuluttajan välillä on kaksisuuntaista vuorovaikutusta, vaikka moni olemassa oleva teoria kuvailee prosessia ainoastaan teatteriorganisaation näkökulmasta.

Tämän tutkimuksen tulokset yhdessä olemassa olevien teorioiden kanssa osoittavat, että yleisötyö avartaa kuluttajien kokemusta teatterista. Teoriassa tärkeänä esille tuleva asiakasuskollisuus tulee myös esille tutkimustuloksissa brändisuhteen muodossa. Vaikka yhteiskehittely on osallistujille tärkeä osa yleisötyötä, aikaisemmat julkaisut käsittelevät hyvin vähän kyseistä prosessia teatteriorganisaation näkökulmasta. Tutkimustulokset auttavat tuomaan esille uusia osa-alueita yleisötyöhön kuluttajien näkökulmasta, kuten oppiminen ja yhteiskehittely. Tutkimustuloksia voi myös soveltaa muille kulttuurisektoreille, mutta on tärkeää ottaa huomioon mahdolliset erot kulttuurialojen välillä ja niiden vaikutus tutkimustulosten oikeellisuuteen.

Avainsanat yleisötyö, teatteritoiminta, yhteiskehittely, kulttuuriorganisaatio

Consumer value created by audience development in theatre organisations

Master's Thesis

Veera Ala-Kaila

Aalto University School of Business

International Design Business Management

Fall 2019

Contents

1.	Intro to audience development	5
1.1.	Research objective and questions	8
1.2.	Structure of the thesis	9
2.	Examining existing literature	11
2.1.	What is audience development?	12
2.2.	The value in audience development	15
2.3.	Audience development in Finland	18
2.4.	Engagement and co-creation	20
2.5.	Co-creating value in audience development	22
2.6.	Conclusion	25
3.	Research methodology	27
3.1.	Case organisations and industry	28
3.2.	Audience development in Finland	30
3.3.	Research methods and strategy	31
3.4.	Data collection	32
3.5.	Interviews	34
3.6.	Observing the activities	36
3.7.	Evaluation and research ethics	37
3.8.	Conclusion	39

4.	Breaking down the findings	40
4.1.	Experience and artistic involvement	43
4.2.	Learning and education	46
4.3.	Brand relationship	50
4.4.	New framework for audience development value	53
4.5.	Summary of Findings	56
5.	Discussion of findings	58
5.1.	Expanding the experience of theatre	59
5.2.	The benefits of audience development	60
5.3.	The value lies in co-creation?	61
5.4.	The missing value of learning	63
5.5.	Concluding the discussion	64
6.	Conclusions	66
6.1.	Theoretical contributions	67
6.2.	Managerial implications	68
6.3.	Limitations of the study	70
6.4.	Future research	71

Tables

Table 1. Audience development categorisation by HCT	30
Table 2. Overview of the semi-structured interviews	34
Table 3. Overview of interviews conducted with audience development professionals	35
Table 4. Overview of the observed activities	36

Figures

Figure 1. The three aspects of audience development	12
Figure 2. Audience development in Finland	17
Figure 3. Process model for customer journey and experience	19
Figure 4. The core principle of co-creation	22
Figure 5. Value in audience development	40
Figure 6. First dimension: co-creation	42
Figure 7. Second dimension: learning	45
Figure 8. Third dimension: brand relationship	49
Figure 9. Audience development in a value creation context	53
Figure 10. Value in audience development	54
Figure 11. The process of co-creation in audience development	61

1. Intro to audience development

Culture is an important part of our society, enriching people's lives and deepening their understanding of the world around them. Even though participating in cultural activities is popular, many cultural organisations depend on different subsidies in being able to operate the way they do. In Finland, municipalities and governments are a big source for these subsidies. To validate that all citizens are benefitting from these kinds of investments, the parties behind the subsidies require cultural organisations to do audience development – a way for people to delve deeper into culture and experience cultural activities from different points of view. Audience development activities in theatre organisations are different types of tours, workshops, events, projects and other possibilities that offer the participants a chance to get to know the theatre in question, a certain performance of theatre as an art form better. Usually, the activities are free to participate in, but some might include an application process whereas others are open for anyone to enroll. Some activities are done together

with schools or other public organisations. Doing these kinds of activities is perceived to provide benefits to all parties involved, but they also require a lot of resources from cultural organisations to be put towards audience development work. It is something you need to do as an organisation as everyone else is doing it too, and in addition your financial survival might depend on it.

This study examines the role of audience development from that value creation point of view and tries to understand what kind of role it plays in building a customer experience in the theatre industry in Finland. The practical aim is to come up with concrete suggestions and managerial implications as to how to increase the co-creational value created in the process, since audience development is something Finnish theatres are required to do. Although audience development in itself is a well known field in cultural and theatre organisations, there is very little data and research about the motivations behind it. The subject is of high interest to theatre organisations, and they want to clarify the motivation behind audience development actions to ensure they get the most out of it. (Neuvonen, 2017.)

Audience development is a part of operations in most cultural organisations in Finland, especially theatres (TINFO, 2018). Based on the research done for this thesis to collect and examine existing theories and literature, publications on audience development are mainly found from the artistic or strictly organisational rather than consumer point of view. Many cultural organisations are not very business oriented, since they do not have to be profitable since a part of their costs is covered by subsidies. This leaves a lot of value undiscovered. Thus, there is a lot of potential to develop audience development into a co-creational business direction, thinking of it as something the theatre does with its audience or customers rather than only for them. Most existing research focuses on an organisational point of view, and examines the ways in which audience development creates additional

value for culture organisations. This leaves a lot of room for looking into what value is actually created for the consumer, and whether they find participating audience development activities meaningful. Only by understanding both sides can audience development really be understood in depth. This is why the theoretical aim of this study is to fill out some of the current research gaps, and form a theoretical framework that enables one to look at audience development as a consumer experience within the theatre context, as well as to compare the two perspectives side by side.

Organisations in the cultural industry create products and services that have very important symbolic functions, for example capturing, refracting and legitimating societal values, meaning they have a big impact on people's views of the world. Yet, these products and services are still very one-dimensional, and the predominant thinking is that the role of these cultural organisations is to produce content for the audience to consume. As Vargo and Lusch (2004, p. 6) mention, "The service-centered view of marketing is customer centric. This means being consumer oriented; collaborating with and learning from customers and being adaptive to their needs. A service-centered dominant logic implies that value is defined by and cocreated with the consumer rather than embedded in output." Organisations adopting new value-creation practises creates a need for changing the nature of engagement and relationship between organisations and their customers and other stakeholders (Ramaswamy, 2009). This creates a challenge for organisations to be able to change their processes into a more customer-centered way of working (KPMG, 2015). The research into these subjects will help in understanding the organisational point of view on the subject.

For consumers it is important to be able to engage with behaviors that strengthen their relationship with the brand. This forces organisations away from the one-dimensional way of

thinking, and makes understanding the consumer and what their value even more important. A brand's future value is partly reliant on the community it creates (Welch, 2012). Community and customer-centered thinking are on very high demand at the moment and companies are investing in brand value a lot. This makes the topic very current in the academic world as well, since the phenomenon is quite new and is evolving all the time. An increasing amount of literature is focusing on how the consumer role is changing and how they actively engage in creating marketing value in the value co-creation process. However, only a little research exists that tries to understand what actually motivates consumers to engage in these activities. (Fernandes & Remelhe, 2016.)

1.1. Research objective and questions

Creating a unique customer experience is of interest to many companies, since due to increased competition and easy access to comparing alternatives online have shifted the way value is created for consumers. In the service-dominant marketing logic, intangibility, exchange processes, and especially relationships are of key importance, which is why the experience matters (Vargo & Lusch, 2004). It also makes the study relevant and ensures that the findings will more likely be used and beneficial for different stakeholders. The objective of the research is to examine the consumer value in audience development. This will help performing arts organisations to plan their actions to take advantage of that value and organisations from other business fields to see whether similar activities could be applied to the way they do business. The research findings will also provide insight into the consumer point of view, since there is currently not a lot of theory or studies examining audience development in theatres from this perspective. This will help in forming a more complete academic picture of what value audience development creates for different stakeholders.

The research questions guiding the study and thesis are the following:

1. What value does participating in audience development activities create for consumers?
2. How does this value correspond to the value created from an organisational point of view?

Data collected from the research will be analysed together with existing theory and literature, to bring more insight from a perspective that is currently lacking from the big picture.

From my personal point of view the highest motivator is to examine a dynamic I find very intriguing, produce findings that lead to concrete suggestions, and to get to know a field I am personally interested in.

1.2. Structure of the thesis

This thesis will first give a better understanding to audience development through reviewing existing studies, theories and literature in the Literature review chapter. The chapter will also examine seminal theories on co-creation, engagement and customer experience. After that, the Methodology chapter will explain how this study was conducted, what methods were used and give more insight into audience development in the theatre industry in Finland. In addition, the chapter will introduce the two theatre organisations that the research data was gathered from, Helsinki City Theatre and the Finnish National Opera. The Methodology chapter will also evaluate the research ethics of this study.

In the Findings chapter the research findings will be presented in a structured way, and a new theoretical framework based on the findings is presented. The findings are divided into three main dimensions that together form the base for value generated by audience

development to consumers. Discussion chapter will then examine the findings in relation to existing theory and compare the studies presented in the Literature review to the new findings and theory from this study. In the end, the Conclusions will pull all the main learnings together, and also present the managerial implications, limitations as well as future research suggestions for the study.

2. Examining existing literature

Customer experience and co-creation have become a necessity for businesses to stay competitive. Cultural organisations are not only competing against each other anymore, but with all the options people are to choose from when deciding how they want to spend their free time. This is why it is increasingly important for cultural organisations and the theatre industry to keep up with business trends and stay competitive. To be able to discover what kind of value is gained from audience development it is important to explore theories and existing research behind both co-creation and audience development in an organisational and business setting as well as audience development and theatre industry overall from a wider perspective.

Audience development is done in organisations concentrated in different art forms, but since this study focuses on the theatre industry, the audience development theories examined in

this study will focus on activities, studies and strategies around theatre. The theatre industry has invested a lot in audience development for a long time, but the change from a company-centered view to a co-creational one, as well as subsidies being diminished, has created a need to widen the audience as well as find new directions and actions to pursue (Alfieri et al., 2011).

This chapter will first examine audience development and its benefits from a theoretical perspective, and then dive deeper into engagement and co-creation. The goal is to form a good knowledge base for the reader regarding these topics, and give an outlook into what theories currently exist regarding audience development. This will help in understanding and interpreting the research findings presented later in the thesis.

2.1. What is audience development?

There are many possible interpretations as to what is meant by talking about audience development. In one of the earliest definitions, Diggle (1984) describes it as "bringing an appropriate number of people, drawn from the widest possible range of social background, economic condition and age, into an appropriate form of contact with the artist (in this case theatre) ... to arrive at the best financial outcome that is compatible with the achievement of that aim" (European Commission, 2015, p.4). To better understand and analyse the value in audience development, Maitland (1997) divides it into three aspects: artistic, marketing and education (Figure 1 below). These aspects are visible as separate dimensions, but overlap with each other forming the concept of audience development.

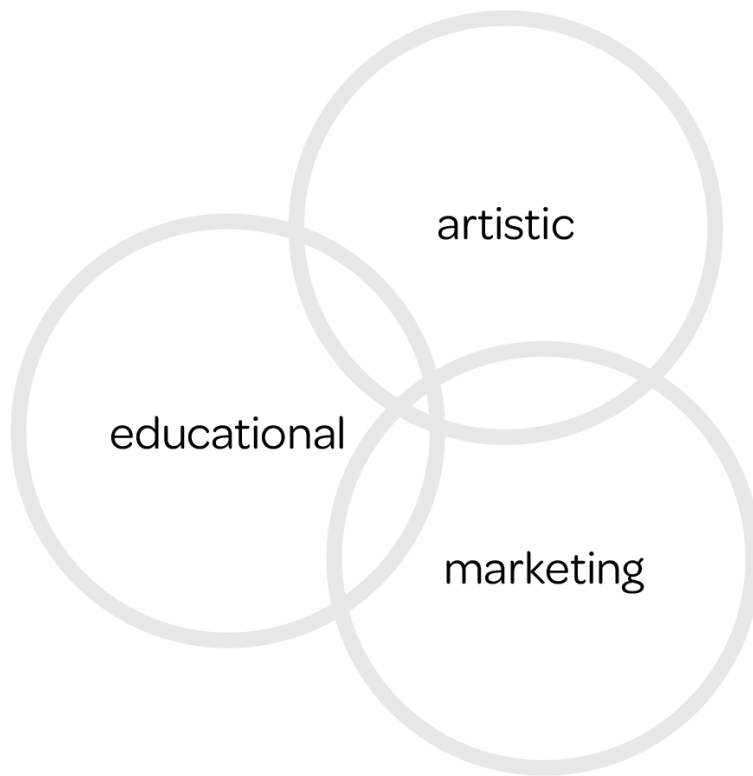


Figure 1. The three aspects of audience development (Maitland, 1997)

According to Maitland, all of these aspects are equally relevant, but often one or the other is emphasized more depending on which point of view or background people designing audience development strategies look into it from. She states that audience development is “a planned process which enhances and broadens specific individuals’ experiences of the arts”. Scollen (2009) identifies audience development as a planned process, which enables and broadens specific individual’s experiences of the arts. Based on these theories it can be concluded that in the context of this study, audience development is a way of allowing consumers to engage with culture, cultural activities and organisations in an interactive manner.

Audience development strongly involves breaking down physical, psychological or social barriers stopping people from participating in the arts. Rogers (1998) defines it as the act of ‘quantitatively and qualitatively targeting new sectors in innovative ways to broaden the arts

audience base, then nurturing new at tenders, along with existing audiences, to encourage them to grow with the organisation. Organisations in the performing arts industry invest a lot on audience development. However, many of these organisations approach it from a very product-centered viewpoint rather than actually engaging with their audience as well as non-attendees to find out how to be able to involve the community in what they do. (Scollen, 2008.) In the latter half of the 1990s, audience development became mainstream in performing arts organisations. One of the main driving forces was governments measuring and allocating arts subsidies mainly in social and economic terms. (Hayes & Slater, 2002.) There was also a market change that changed the emphasis from supply to demand (Carr et al., 2001, p.119) and highlighted the importance of culture as a tool for wider social inclusion (Hayes & Slater, 2002).

Theatre can offer a lot more than finished performances and people bring more value to a theatre than what they do by being a passive audience (Tutkivan teatterityön keskus, 2010). Many theories seem to present audience development as a way of acquiring new customers and maintaining great customer satisfaction. However, at Helsinki City Theatre, audience development practises are seen as a combination of education and outreach, growing the audience and social responsibility (Neuvonen, 2017), meaning the term is thought of as a many-sided way of including consumers and the society in their operations. All actions heavily involve the audience and treat them as a co-creative resource. This is why a lot of the theories on co-creation can be used in analysing audience development when it comes to this study.

Scollen (2009) examines different methodologies for audience development that give a good insight into how it works and what kind of effects can be reached. What unites the methods reviewed is the understanding that arts organisations, just like companies

(Ozcan & Ramaswamy, 2014), have to become more consumer focused and to widen their audience by being active in making non-attenders want to experience the arts. While it is also important to maintain a great relationship with the existing audience, to be able to maintain a stable organisation with a place in the community, there is a need to create new relationships. However, there are risks in making consumers face new situations and it creates a level of uncertainty within them. Thus, lowering the barrier of joining in arts and theatre activities is a key to be able to succeed in audience development. (Scollen, 2009.)

2.2. The value in audience development

Since the 1960s, theatre sales have depended heavily on subscribers, meaning people who purchase a season ticket, because they provided a predictable income stream renewing their subscription year after year. However, recently subscribers are declining, forcing theatres to rethink their sales models. Attracting single ticket buyers, meaning people who purchase tickets to single performances, is much more expensive, which is why it is especially important to engage these single-ticket buyers to build customer loyalty. (Alfieri et al., 2011.) Focusing on this relationship and making the single-ticket buyers feel important helps in achieving self-generated income, which is a very significant factor in the sustainability of arts organisations now relying heavily on subsidies (Hayes & Slater, 2002). Looking deeper into the motivations and interests, subscribers and single-ticket buyers are very similar and have a lot to do with learning and being challenged culturally. This drives for more focus in the relationship between the organisation and the audience with a goal to get out of a merely transactional relationship. (Alfieri et al., 2011.)

The process of audience development can be seen to include various aspects to get people to engage with the arts. Suonsyrjä (2007) sees the ideal audience development strategy to

“combine the work of arts marketers, educationalists, managers, planners, programmers and artists – working together to meet and balance artistic, social and financial objectives.” This goes well together with Maitland’s (1997) view of three-dimensional audience development, where social objectives would belong to the educational and financial to the marketing dimension of audience development.

Art and culture are seen as an active part of people’s everyday wellbeing (Bardy et al., 2007). This has also started to show in the field of health care where the use of creative methods is emphasized as support for growth and rehabilitation (Karkkulainen, 2011). The Ministry of Education and Culture in Finland published a study in 2008 about the connections between culture and wellbeing. The study looked into art-based projects done in the healthcare industry that enabled an encounter of different sectors. The results showed that art application, art-based working and research methods, community art or sociocultural methods offered innovative and sustainable possibilities to support wellbeing. (Juntunen, 2013.) Based on this information audience development can also be considered to be a social responsibility.

Many audience development strategies focus a lot on delivering new audiences from non-attending minority groups, in other words ‘achieving wider social inclusion’. This is a natural way of practicing corporate sustainability for performing arts organisations but attracting and retaining these groups as well as trying to integrate them into the mainstream audience is difficult and expensive. Furthermore, there are no studies about the long-term benefits of these actions. There is also a lot of pressure from the government to execute these types of audience development programs and activities (TINFO, 2018). Not participating in these corporate sustainability or social responsibility programs could jeopardize the funding of an organisation, and potentially affect their reputation by being ‘the only one not doing good’.

However, there could also be possibilities in choosing the audience development activities that are to be executed more carefully. If there is no income coming in from a certain activity, it might not make sense to try to get a subsidy to be able to afford to do it. By focusing some of these resources into creating strategies that are more sustainable both income- and relationship-wise performing arts organisations can achieve real value in the form of customer loyalty and depending less on subsidies. (Hayes & Slater, 2002.)

According to a study (NEA, 2009) conducted in the US, in 2008 the American adults' participation in cultural activities was at its lowest since 1982 when the survey began tracking it. The arts audience had also grown older than the general population, indicating an urgent need to change the approach towards audience relationships. It has also become hard to track people's participation in arts since the ways people want to engage with it have changed into something beyond the traditional measure of participation such as a more interactive or participatory experience. (Alfieri et al., 2011.)

Engagement is a key factor in both co-creation and audience development (Alfieri et al., 2011; Brodie et al., 2011). Alfieri et al. (2011) present an engagement strategy used to 'build a deeper relationship with the audience by developing an ongoing conversation about the work on stage' that was designed to resonate with the desire within people to explore and connect ideas to their own lives. The process examined by Alfieri et al. (2011) is very much concentrated on concrete actions that help in reaching and engaging both subscribers and especially single-ticket buyers. The strategy suggests theatres should even allow their audience to choose what will have appeal. It bases highly on giving the audience ownership of what is theirs, connecting artistic leaders with the audience to co-create art together. Since the audience patterns of attendance will change over time (Hayes & Slater, 2002),

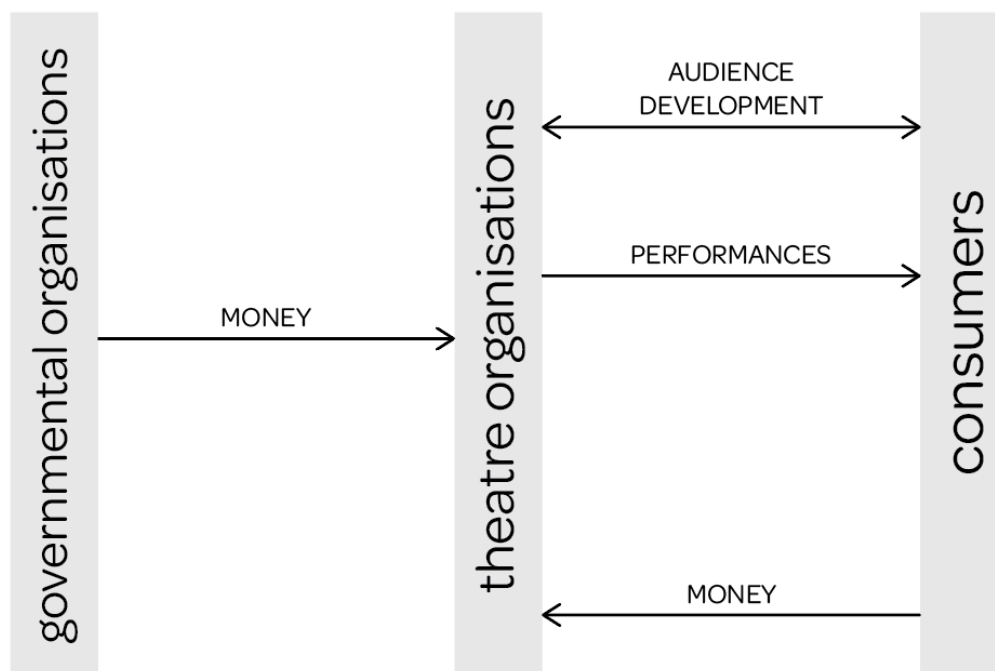


Figure 2. Audience development in Finland

this conversation between the audience and the organisation will also help in reviewing the current audience development strategy.

2.3. Audience development in Finland

In Finland audience development activities started in the beginning of the 1990s. The thought was that an audience member can and should be more than just a passive observer. Nowadays most of Finnish theatres have an employee whose specific job it is to manage development activities. Tutkivan Teatterityön keskus (2010) states that the financing for audience development comes from the theatres' own budget or in some cases from the cities or municipalities culture and education fund. However, since most theatres are run largely on subsidies, we can conclude that also audience development is heavily funded by the same third parties giving out those subsidies (Figure 2).

Even though different third parties do fund theatre organisations, most interactions happen between consumers and theatres. The industry is very non-commercial, and even though these subsidies can be thought of as a type of sponsorships, the subsidising parties are not visible in any marketing communications between the theatre and consumer. According to Tutkivan Teatterityön keskus (2010), the meaning of audience development is not only to teach audience members, but the field can be very broad depending the theatre's on interests and resources. They state that the target group is everyone interested in theatre from kids to senior citizens, and that the activities can include various lectures, tours, workshops and interview sessions. In Finland most cities have a so-called City Theatre that is maintained by the municipality, and almost all of these theatres do audience development activities.

When people go to the theatre they do not usually form any kind of relationship with the performers and very few people understand what the whole process includes. One of the basic elements of audience development is increasing people's knowledge and making art more approachable. Another important aspect is engaging the existing audience as well as attracting new potential viewers. The traditional model of theatre might not be interesting to everyone but being able to have a peek behind the scenes might attract someone even though theatre as an art form would not be their 'thing'. (Tutkivan Teatterityön keskus, 2010.) However, even though the previous statement by Tutkivan teatterityön keskus would be true, it is questionable whether attracting these kinds of people bring any real value to the theatre. There is little to no research put into whether participating in Finnish audience development activities actually converts people who are not interested in theatre into actual paying customers.

In several studies from outside Finland (Hayes & Slater, 2002; Scollen, 2009), audience development is presented as more of a way to increase customer satisfaction and attract new customers. The approach seems to be more business oriented than how audience development is described in Finnish sources (Tutkivan Teatterityön keskus, 2010; TINFO, 2018). This might be, for example, due to a lack of more scientific research into audience development in Finland, but also shows a knowledge gap in understanding where the generated value lies.

2.4. Engagement and co-creation

According to Brodie et al (2011) the term customer engagement has been used a lot since 2005, also in academic marketing literature. There aren't that many systematic conceptualizations of what engagement in marketing means, but one of the most

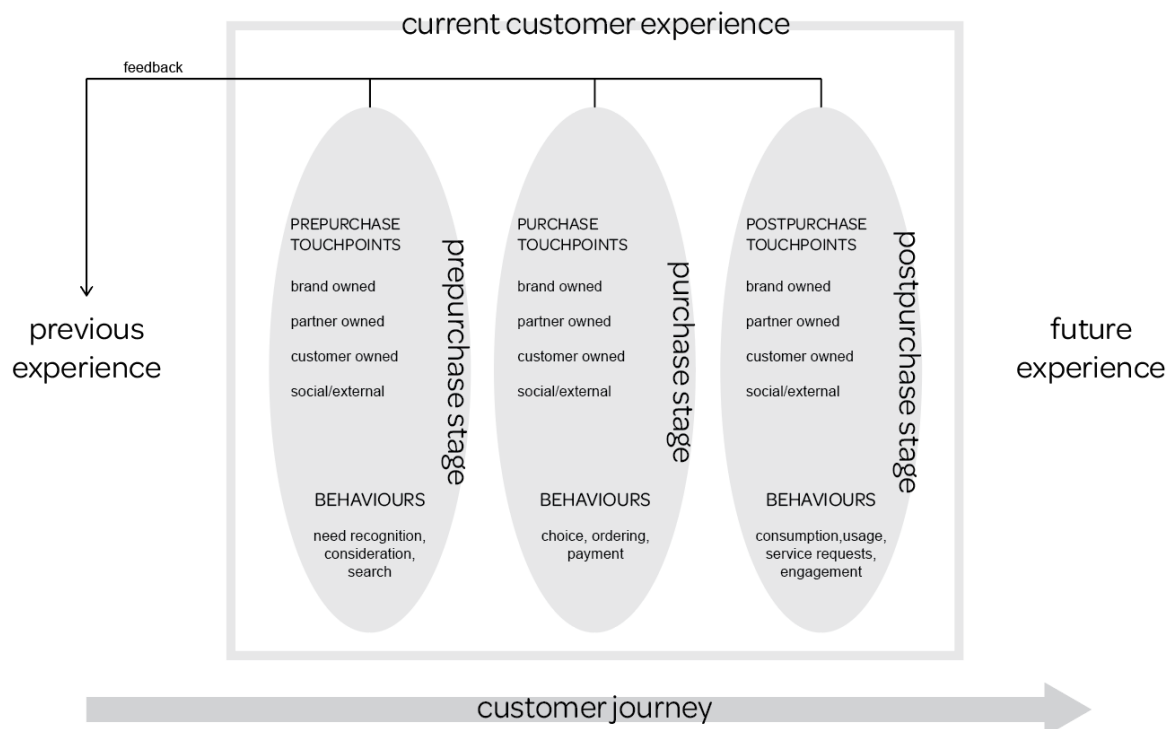


Figure 3. Process model for customer journey and experience (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016)

comprehensive ones defines customer engagement as a 'multidimensional concept comprising cognitive, emotional and/or behavioural dimensions' (Brodie et al., 2011). The level of customer engagement in a certain experience or joint activity can make the consumer feel they receive a specific level of perceived value, also called co-created value. Interactive, co-creative experiences can also be interpreted as engaging, meaning these two terms are strongly interconnected. (Fernandes & Remelhe, 2016.) Engagement is something that keeps coming up in audience development context, too.

There is an increasing focus on customer experience within the business community, and it is one of the key factors companies use to build brand loyalty as well as loyalty towards channels and services. Lemon and Verhoef (2016) present a model of the customer journey with its different touchpoints and how customer experience is formed (Figure 3).

Since audience development is meant to lower the barrier to participate in theatre, it can be thought of as a part of the customer experience. Within Lemon and Verhoef's model, it would be heavily linked to both Prepurchase and Postpurchase stages. Combining audience development work with the full customer journey an audience member goes through is not very visible throughout theatres at the moment. However, it might be a useful way to map and define the additional value the theatre organisation wants to create for the customer before or after the actual 'purchase', in this case meaning going to see a play or performance.

Consumers today expect to be able to co-create and even lead innovation which forces companies to come up with creative solutions if they want to stay competitive. More or less everyone has access to the same information, so the thing that will determine success is who is able to make use of that data and convert it into action. Humans are social beings and thus have an instinctive drive to belong to a social network. They want to feel unique

but at the same time connected to others. Consumers have a need to build their own identities, socialize with the world around them, express themselves in a creative way and to enjoy unique, personalized experiences. The impulse for this is not new, but the modern age has made it easier to enjoy self-created, externally influenced experiences within one's social fabric. (Ozcan & Ramaswamy, 2014.) These impulses and a new kind of demand for participation support the aforementioned way of interlacing audience development activities with paid experiences within the customer experience and journey.

2.5. Co-creating value in audience development

When trying to further understand the consumer needs and motivations related to experiences, it is important to take into account the roles of an organisation and customer are becoming less different from each other. This is considered to be the next key competitive advantage to be able to encourage consumers to be value co-creators. (Fernandes & Remelhe, 2016.) The world is currently experiencing a shift in the paradigms of value creation as we are moving from a company-centered view of creating unilateral value to a co-creational paradigm of value creation (Ozcan & Ramaswamy, 2014, p. 17). Top-down marketing and innovation tools are losing their effectiveness due to the massive increase in information available to consumers (Winsor, 2010). Both Ozcan and Ramaswamy (2014) as well as Winsor (2010) identify interaction and dialogue as a key factor in innovation and developing the experience mind-set.

To establish customer motivation and to make them want to get involved in co-creational activities it is important to recognize the remarkable role customer engagement has in making it happen (Fernander & Remelhe, 2016). Existing research indicates consumers can be willing to extensively contribute their time, skills or knowledge through customer

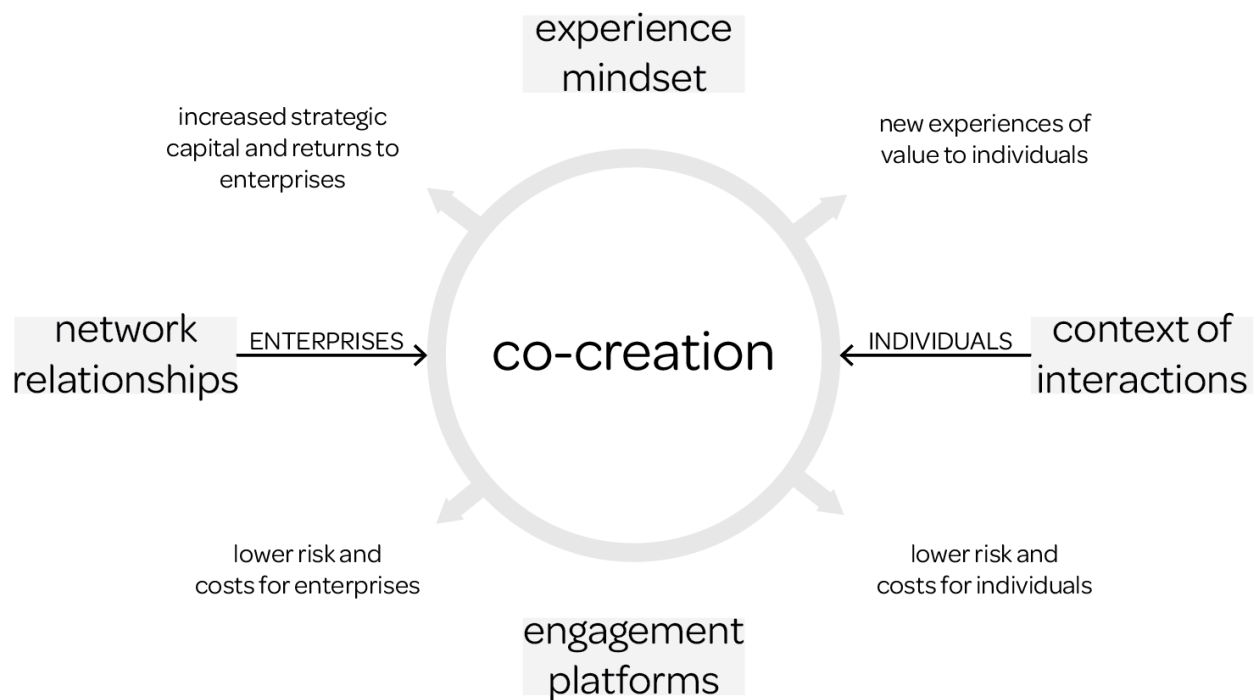


Figure 4. The core principle of co-creation (Gouillart & Ramaswamy, 2010)

engagement using their own networks (Schau et al., 2009) when given the right motivation. These principles can also be translated into the motivation behind wanting to participate in audience development activities. However, it can be questioned whether these activities are really aimed to be co-creational, or whether they are just aimed to provide the consumer with a more special customer experience to make them committed to the brand or organisation. Some activities have a more co-creational goal, for example producing plays together with the audience. Most of the activities, nevertheless, are focused on teaching or showing the consumer something without them actually contributing to the final outcome or experience. The framework (Figure 4) by Gouillart and Ramaswamy helps in recognising whether all aspects of co-creation are being included in the activities and thus determining whether it can be described as co-creation.

If all of the four main contributors, enterprise, individual, engagement platform and an experience mindset are present, the interaction should produce all of the four outcomes in some manner. As can be interpreted from the framework, co-creation connects interaction with individuals with companies through various engagement platforms with a mind-set of experience. These platforms can be both concrete or figurative, the only requirement is that they enable the aforementioned dialogue between the two parties. Within the theatre industry, audience development is where most of these platforms lie. Using resources from both organisations as well as individuals, more value can be created that will benefit all stakeholders in the forms of lower risks and costs, increased strategic capital and new value experiences. (Gouillart & Ramaswamy, 2010).

According to the study by Fernandes and Remelhe (2016), knowledge acquisition and intrinsic motives are the most important motivators for consumers to participate in co-creative actions. Other relevant determinant emerged from the study is socializing with others who share the same interests. The study suggests that the participants expect to attain some co-creational value for themselves within the whole engagement process. We can assume that by participating in an audience development activity, the participant feels they are more connected and more a part of the theatre organisation than other people who are not participating. The consumers who act as regular contributors recognize the value and benefits they have to gain from co-creation more clearly than occasional participators. This leads to a higher willingness to engage in co-creation. (Fernandes & Remelhe, 2016.) This suggests that people who would have participated in audience development activities several times would be both more aware of the benefit they and the theatre get from it and also more willing to do it again. Ergo, according to Fernandes and Remelhe (2016), establishing a long-lasting relationship with as wide a range of the audience as possible will make them feel a certain ownership of the brand and thus more committed to it.

2.6. Conclusion

There are several possible interpretations of the concept audience development, but most theoretical sources describe it as a way of allowing consumers to engage with culture, cultural activities and organisations in an interactive manner. Historically, audience development became common in performing arts organisations in the 90s. The main driving forces were governments allocating arts subsidies in social and economic terms, and the market changing its emphasis from supply to demand.

The process of audience development can be seen to include various aspects to get people to engage with the arts. The two most common approaches to it that come up in the theories are trying to convert casual, single-ticket buyers into active theatre goers, and delivering new audiences from non-attending groups, in other words social responsibility. By focusing their resources into creating audience development strategies that are sustainable both income- and relationship-wise performing arts organisations could achieve value in the form of customer loyalty and depending less on subsidies (Hayes & Slater, 2002).

Since audience development is meant to lower the barrier to participate in theatre, it can be thought of as a part of the customer experience. When trying to further understand the consumer motivations related to experiences, it is important to take into account the roles of an organisation and customer are becoming less different from each other. The participants expect to attain some co-creational value for themselves within the whole engagement process (Fernandes & Remelhe, 2016). We can assume that by participating in an audience development activity, the participant feels they are more connected and more a part of the theatre organisation than other people who are not participating, and thus audience development can be seen as a way of co-creation. However, it can be questioned whether

these activities are really aimed to be co-creational, or whether they are just aimed to provide the consumer with a more special customer experience to make them committed to the brand or organisation.

Overall, existing theory gives a lot of indications as to what the possible value created by audience development for consumers could be through examining it from an organisational point of view, and explaining the process and motivations behind it. Audience development theories together with basic theories of engagement and co-creation will provide a basis to look into the research data and analysis. The following chapter will describe the methods used to collect that data. The chosen methodology allows to dive deeper into whether the aspects of the aforementioned theories are really present in audience development or not.

3. Research methodology

The main research strategy for this thesis is a case study. Though it is not limited to a quantitative or qualitative approach or data (Yin 2012), since the purpose of the research is to understand what kind of value does audience development create for consumers, the case and data is qualitative. As Radbourne et al. (2010) suggest relying only on quantitative methods in measuring audience satisfaction does not provide enough insight into the intrinsic benefits in arts attendance. To understand how people see the value in audience development and what it means to them, qualitative research methods provide me with a wider and deeper perspective into the subject. As Stake (2003, p. 134) notes, choosing qualitative or quantitative approach is more about what is going to be studied than a methodological choice.

The aim of qualitative research is rather to find theoretically meaningful interpretations or to understand a certain phenomenon, audience development. A single-case study is a good approach to do research on a phenomenon in a real-life context (Yin 2012, p. 4-6). Also, most of the theories used in the literary review are based on case studies from different theatres. The aim of this study is to explore and understand the value audience development in performing arts organisations creates for consumers.

3.1. Case organisations and industry

As mentioned before, most of the theory used in the literary review is also based on case studies from different theatres. According to Stake (2003) the chosen case should be relevant, which is why the organisations in this thesis study, Helsinki City Theatre (HCT) and Finnish National Opera, who are part of the biggest theatre organisations doing audience development in Finland. Both invest a lot into audience development and have a wide range of activities towards various audience groups. Helsinki City Theatre's audience development participants and activities are the main source of data in this study. Supportive information has been obtained through interviews with audience development managers from both organisations. This data is used to further understand the audience development context from the organisational point of view.

In Finland, the performing arts industry is heavily dependent on government and other subsidies, and very few make enough money from their own business to break even. For example, in 2018, Helsinki City Theatre got 56% of their revenue from subsidies (Helsingin kaupunginteatteri 2018). For Finnish National Opera 73% of their revenue during that year came from subsidies (Ooppera Baletti 2018). This leads to a situation where the government and other co-operative parties heavily influence the kind of activities that theatres do. Many

theatres have also been forced to look for new ways in their activities to make money.

Helsinki City Theatre has been looking a lot into working with businesses and raising their facility utilization percentages by renting the spaces out, for example. (Neuvonen, 2017.)

Helsinki City Theatre is being maintained by the Helsinki Theatre Foundation and the board members are chosen and appointed by the Helsinki City Board. Helsinki City Theatre wants to be seen as a modern popular bilingual repertoire theatre and aims to provide a diverse range of high standard performances to as wide a range of people as possible. The theatre also produces an extensive range of children's theatre performances, dance performances of its own dance company and a range of Finnish and foreign drama, comedies and musicals. In 2018 HCT produced twenty-one premieres with fourteen other productions ongoing and had altogether 281 458 people come see their performances. (Helsingin kaupunginteatteri 2018.)

Finnish National Opera is governed by the Foundation of the Finnish National Opera and Ballet and is the only professional opera and ballet organisation in Finland. Their vision is to be a forerunner in providing quality art experiences to different audiences not only in Helsinki, where their facilities are located, but all over Finland. In 2018 they produced 654 performances and had 274 187 people in the audience. They also visited twenty-six cities in Finland with their productions. (Ooppera Baletti 2018.)

Both organisations are very active in audience development and art education. There are numerous performance-related workshops organized for different groups of people: children, adolescents, adults and senior citizens as well as business associates and companies. Helsinki City Theatre also cooperates with City of Helsinki and various schools in art education projects. (Helsingin kaupunginteatteri 2018.)

3.2. Audience development in Finland

The Finnish theatre industry heavily relies on subsidies from the government and from municipalities. In 2017 in Finland, in total 180 million was given to theatres as subsidies whereas their revenue was a bit under 76 million euros. Without these subsidies, the tickets to theatre performances would cost three times as much as they do at the moment. Since such a big part of the funding comes from external sources, and theatres could not survive without it, the relationship between the investors and the theatres becomes uneven. In 2017, over 340,000 people in Finland participated in audience development activities. The amount of people participating in audience development activities has gone up as has the part audience development place in all activities arranged by theatres. TINFO (2018) explains the value of audience development as allowing the audience member to experience live performance and culture in multiple touch points compared to just in a theatre performance. Multidimensional audience development creates an atmosphere of openness and builds and strengthens the dialogue between the theatre organisation and residents in the area or other potential audiences.

The government sees it as important to make arts and culture more accessible for all citizens. As mentioned by TINFO (2018), there is a pressure from higher up to do audience development activities. The Ministry of Education and Culture highly emphasizes the value of audience development, creating a pressure for theatres to do it because of their financial dependence on the subsidies granted by the Ministry. TINFO (2018) also suggests that the sense of participation created by audience development activities strengthens and validates the existence of theatre in the minds of the citizens and lowers the barrier for people to participate in theatre performances. However, there are no studies to be found to validate these hypotheses.

Table 1. Audience development categorisation by HCT

Behind the scenes	theatre backstage tours, panels or Q&As with the artists, open rehearsals
Education	collaborating with schools, providing study materials
Social inclusion	art projects for people living in areas with lower access to culture or people with disabilities
Career	allowing students to come and see how it would be to work in the theatre industry, work placement
Company collaboration	activities arranged specifically for a company that pays for their employees to be able to participate
Social media	engaging and activating consumers on social media through different types of content

In Helsinki City Theatre, year 2018, altogether 15 674 people participated in the 576 events organized as part of audience development. The focus has been highly on events and projects aimed for children and adolescents but the theatre also organized a lot of events open to all audience such as open practices, workshops and theatre visitation possibilities. (Helsingin kaupunginteatteri 2018.) When it comes to Finnish National Opera, 17 108 people participated in their audience development activities in 2018 (Ooppera Baletti 2018).

3.3. Research methods and strategy

This study focuses on the consumer point of view in regard to audience development, since it has been studied the least. As pictured in the previous chapter, there are already some studies focused in the organisational point of view in regards to audience development. Not understanding both sides leaves a research gap and imbalance this study aims to address. Wanting to understand the full experience of the consumers participating in audience development activities, including their thoughts and perceptions during the event, semi-structured interviews are the main source of data for the study. Field research methods aim

to gain a thorough understanding of the research domain. In this case, the domain is the case company as an organisation, which is why open-ended observation was used to gain a contextual point of view into audience development as well as a deeper understanding of the interviewees' experiences. (Bakker et al. 2013.) The data collected through these means will be combined to gain as wide a picture as possible into the case and to reach meaningful insights. Both these methods go under the "field of ethnographic research" (LeCompte et al. 1999).

As LeCompte et al. (1999) state, ethnographic research is often guided by theory, which is why the literary review acts as a base for field work in this study. It is important to be able to combine qualitative interviews with observations made in action and by participation. The research was conducted locally within the case organisation and the aim has been to collect as much face to face data as possible, meaning the combination of verbal interviews with observation of both the activities themselves as well as the interviewee in the interview situation. Ethnographic research aims to understand, clarify and fill in existing theoretical models as well as to create new ones. (Eriksson, Kovalainen 2008.) In this study, an initial model based on the data gathered from the literary review will be redesigned based on the research findings.

3.4. Data collection

For the study, I chose two ways of collecting data. Qualitative semi-structured interviews conducted with audience members who have participated in an audience development activity at the case organisation are the main source of data, since the study focuses on the consumer point of view. The interviewees and the activities studied are from six general audience development activity categories and they are all managed by Helsinki

City Theatre's audience development manager, who was also my contact person during the study. In addition, I observed all the activities the interviewees participated in to gain more perspective into their experience and way of thinking.

The data used in this study has been collected by using the aforementioned methods and in collaboration with Helsinki City Theatre and Finnish National Opera. To get a wide perspective into audience development in Finnish theatre industry I participated in various activities HCT organized and interviewed participants representing different stakeholders (LeCompte et al. 1999). This enabled me to go deeper into the research question, to see what kind of value can audience development create to consumers. To get an intuitive and intellectual grasp of the ways things are prioritized and organized in the case company regarding audience development I used open-ended observation. The aim is to investigate hidden patterns and initiate discussion through dialogue and reflection (Holliday 2007, p. 15-18). The collected data will only represent the view of a limited number of people from one case organisation, meaning the reality in this research is socially constructed; it appears to everyone from a different angle (Hudson, Ozanne 1988). For example, it has to be taken into account that the value different customers gain or look for is contextual and individual.

The activities chosen for the study were from five different audience development activity categories. The categorization was done by me based on the discussions I had with the audience development manager at Helsinki City Theatre. I observed these activities and then interviewed one of the participants after each activity. In addition to these five activity categories, interacting with people on social media is a big part of HCT building relationships with their audience and they consider it a part of audience development as well as marketing. For this purpose, I met with the person responsible for social media content creation to observe and interview her about that aspect of audience development.

3.5. Interviews

Interviews with audience members were conducted as semi structured to find subfactors and personal variables for the interviewees (LeCompte et al. 1999). The interviews were mostly done right after the interviewee had participated in an audience development activity to ensure they remember the experience as accurately as possible and thus can more easily reflect on it. However, this setting also meant the interviews often had to be done within a relatively short period of time, which is also a reason why semi structured interview was a good strategy choice since it helps to keep the process efficient (LeCompte et al. 1999). All semi-structured interviews were recorded to ensure efficient data collection.

Table 2. Overview of the semi-structured interviews

Event/project	Date	Location	Interviewee	Duration
Helsinki Dance Company open rehearsal	26.10.2017	Helsinki City Theatre, Hakaniemi, Helsinki	audience member, Participant B	30min
'Taidetestaajat' art awareness program for 8th	9.11.2017	Helsinki City Theatre, Hakaniemi, Helsinki	school teacher, Participant E	10min
'Taidetestaajat' art awareness program for 8th	9.11.2017	Helsinki City Theatre, Hakaniemi, Helsinki	8th grade student, Participant A	10min
Pääroolissa Jakomäki audience development program in an area where the access to cultural activities is limited	29.11.2017	Päiväkoti Kotilo, Jakomäki, Helsinki	Participant C	30min
Work practise program (TET) for upper elementary students	1.12.2017	Helsinki City Theatre, Hakaniemi, Helsinki	9th grader, Participant F	40min
Pääroolissa Jakomäki audience development program	12.3.2018	Studio Pasila, Pasila, Helsinki	Participant D	20min

Each interview was approached from an epistemological or constructivist point of view, and value is looked at as a subjective experience dependant on the person who is experiencing it. A constructivist approach also looks at the setting in which the interviewees are in, which also required me as the researcher to position myself within the context. (Dudovskiy 2018.) This why it was so important to also observe the activities in question in addition to the interviews.

Even though this study focuses on the audience point of view, to be able to better discuss the implications of the findings, two interviews were conducted with audience development representatives from two major Finnish theatres: Helsinki City Theatre and Finnish National Opera. The interviewees were provided with some initial questions before the interview. The interview situation was unstructured, since the topics were discussed freely. This interview style was chosen since the interviewees had more experience on audience development than me. This allowed them to have room for possible new topics and points of view that might arise during the conversation. It also enabled me to look into the subject from both interviewees' and their organisations' own viewpoints and experience, but still within the scope of the study.

Table 3. Overview of interviews conducted with audience development professionals

Organisation	Date	Location	Interviewee	Duration
Helsinki City Theatre	4.5.2017	Helsinki City Theatre	Education Manager	1hr
Finnish National Opera	1.8.2019	Finnish National Opera	Audience Outreach Manager	1hr

3.6. Observing the activities

To get another perspective to audience development activities as experiences and to deeper understand the interviewees I observed all the events the interviewees participated in before their interviews. Observation was done being one of the participants, meaning I did all of the same things and had access to the same information than other participants during the activity.

Table 4. Overview of the observed activities

Event/project	Date	Location	Description
Helsinki Dance Company open rehearsal	16.10.2017	Helsinki City Theatre, Hakaniemi, Helsinki	A company had provided their employees with a recreational day including seeing an open dance rehearsal. The piece being rehearsed included a lot of improvisation and according to the choreographer was more interactive than their usual pieces. The artists involved the audience members a lot, and asking for opinions, ideas and suggestions.
'Taidetestaajat' art awareness program for 8th (name translates as 'art testers')	9.11.2017	Helsinki City Theatre, Hakaniemi, Helsinki	Finnish Government initiated a project where art organisations all over Finland could participate in. The goal is to provide an opportunity to go see a live arts performance for every 8th grader in the country. The students and their teachers came to see Myrskyluodon Maija musical, and had also been provided with some additional material related to the show to be used in class before the event. The participants were also given a tour of the theatre and got to ask questions from the child actors from the musical.

Pääroolissa Jakomäki: music in theatre workshop	29.11.2017	Päiväkoti Kotilo, Jakomäki, Helsinki	Both adults and children enrolled in the Jakomäki project had different interactive workshops throughout the autumn to learn more about different aspects of how a theatre or musical production comes together. The workshop included both lecture type teaching section as well as acting exercises revolving around the music topic.
Pääroolissa Jakomäki: theatre practise	12.3.2018	Studio Pasila, Pasila, Helsinki	An amateur theatre group put together from the participants of the Jakomäki project were rehearsing their next theatre production on stage for the first time.
Social media content creator at work	17.3.2018	Helsinki City Theatre, Hakaniemi, Helsinki	Shadowing HCT's employee responsible for creating content for social media throughout her workday. The day included a lot of conversation while doing the regular work tasks.

Because sensitive material was shown and discussed during the events, recording them was not a possibility. Thus, the data collected from them is based on my own notes collected through observation. In addition to these events I also participated in some activities showcasing the theatre setting, since finding and observing settings and locations that clarify the context of the study are important from an ethnographic point of view (LeCompte et al. 1999).

3.7. Evaluation and research ethics

In qualitative business research ethics need to be considered in everything from research design and data collection to analysis and data storing. This also includes the relationship between the researcher and the researched person or group. Informed consent within interview participants is important to ensure the interview setting is as professional and

comfortable as possible. When considering the readers of the complete thesis, making sure all logic behind the research process is presented as clearly as possible will make sure anyone can follow it and better see the logic in the analysis and arguments presented. (Eriksson, Kovalainen 2008.)

To gain informed consent from all interviewees, they were informed about the purpose and aim of the study (for the audience development activity participants by both HCT and me), as well as where and how the data from the interview is to be used. They were also informed that the interview will be recorded for data collection purposes. All agreements were made verbally to make the process smoother since the interviews were conducted right after each audience development activity. The possible downside of using verbal agreements is that if there is a dispute and both parties have interpreted the agreement differently, there is no document to refer to. However, since the study data includes very little personal information of the interviewees and their names will not be mentioned, the risk of that happening is small enough to choose verbal agreements. There were also a few of the interviewees who were minors. In this case a consent was asked from both the interviewee themselves, but also beforehand from either their parent or teacher.

When it comes to observation, it is always filtered through the researcher's interpretive frames meaning it is important to see my own biases when interpreting the observation notes and data (LeCompte et al. 1999). Since theatre is an important part of my personal life, I might have a bias to see the situations as positive experiences just because I myself feel like they are such. This means I had to pay special attention when taking notes and especially when doing data interpretation that I stay as objective as possible. The key thing was to write down behaviour and other factors as they can be seen, not in terms of what the behaviour translates to for the observer.

The data collected from both interviews and observation was stored in a cloud on a private account to ensure its safety. The interviews were recorded as anonymous. All files were accessible only through Google Drive or my personal phone and everything was password protected.

3.8. Conclusion

The main research strategy for this thesis is a case study and the research data has been collected through a collaboration with the two biggest theatre organisations in Finland: Helsinki City Theatre and Finnish National Opera. Since the purpose of the research is to understand what kind of value audience development creates for consumers, the case and data are qualitative. To understand how people see the value in audience development and what it means to them, qualitative research methods provide a wider and deeper perspective into the subject. The main research methods used for this study are semi-structured interviews and observation. All interviewees were participants in HCT's audience development activities. Each interview was conducted right after participating to ensure they remember the experience as accurately as possible and thus can more easily reflect on it. I also observed each of these activities as a participant to get another perspective to audience development activities as experiences and to deeper understand the interviewees. The data collected through these methods will be presented in the following chapter as research findings. Also, an initial model based on the data gathered from the literary review will be redesigned based on the findings.

4. Breaking down the findings

The empirical findings of this study divide value in audience development into three main dimensions: co-creation, learning and brand relationship. The data collected during this study can help in understanding the value audience development brings to different stakeholders, the focus being on consumers and potential audience members. To help categorise and analyse the findings from this study, Maitland's (1997) framework of dividing audience development into three categories has been used as a guideline through which the data is looked at.

Maitland divides value created by audience development into three aspects: artistic, marketing and education, which are included in Figure 5. Although the respondents' answers clearly had these three aspects, some core themes were emphasized from outside the existing framework.

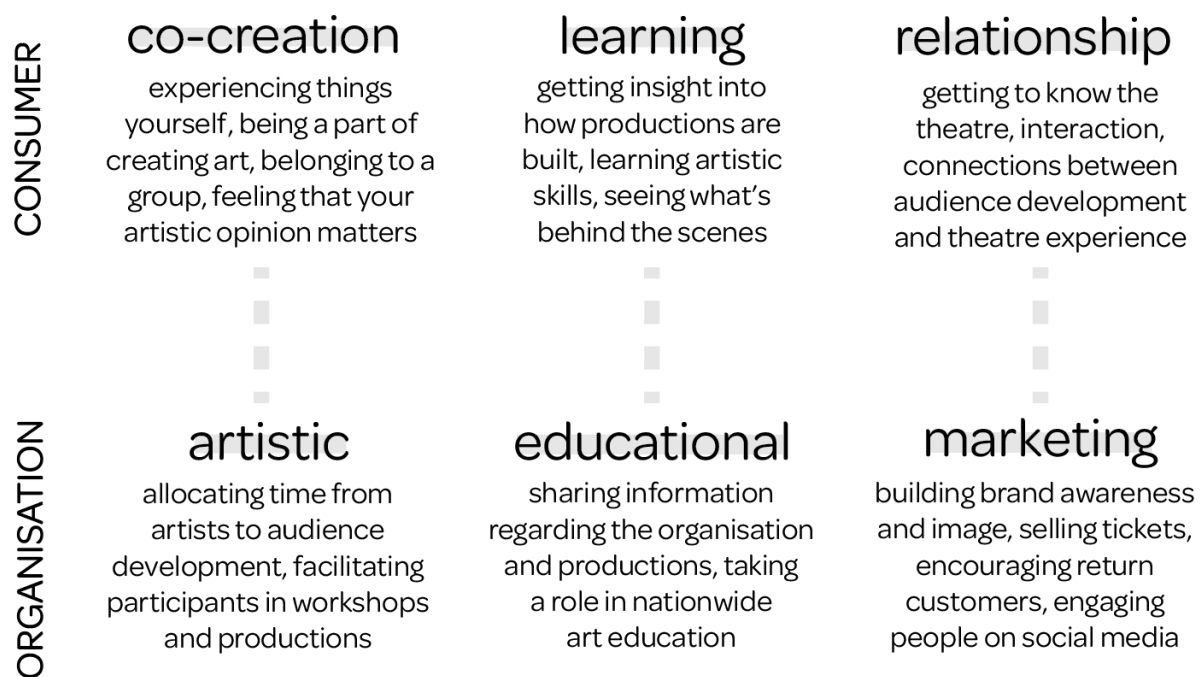


Figure 5. Value in audience development

The original framework also looks at audience development value from the organisational viewpoint. By combining Maitland's dimensions into the ones created based on the findings from this research, it is possible to form a figure (Figure 5) that compares audience development from the two viewpoints. Each of the three consumer dimensions are further discussed in the following subchapters.

All interviewees as well as other participants in the activities observed were from very different backgrounds and age groups, as well as had different levels of existing experience from theatre overall. The observation gave good insight into the nature of each activity as well as the dynamics between each group of participants, whenever there was one. Overall, all participants were very interested in theatre in one way or another, regardless of whether they had seen a lot of plays or done theatre related activities as a hobby before.

General attitude towards theatre and HCT as a theatre organisation was positive, and the participants had a very open, eager to learn mindset.

“I couldn’t wait to come here and see and participate in everything that the theatre setting entails.” - Participant A

Many interviewees considered themselves lucky to be able to participate in audience development activities. This indicates a general thinking that these activities are not commonly available or accessible for people. For theatre organisations such as Helsinki City Theatre or Finnish National Opera, providing access to culture is one of the key drivers in audience development. Thus, it can be argued whether there would be a bigger demand for cultural activities than what there currently is. Interviewees also had very different reasons behind why they wanted to participate. For some, it was more about having a hobby, for others, learning more about theatre to get more out of the plays they go and see. For one interviewee participation was even a way of advancing their future dream career.

“If you go and ask around on the street, people wouldn’t know what audience development is.” - Participant B

Audience development as a term was not a very well known term in Finland in the opinion of the interviewees. Even though in Finnish language the term (“yleisötyö”) is quite established (whereas in English where there are a lot of terms used regarding the same thing), it is mostly used within culture organisations rather than in outbound communications. The way people describe audience development varies a lot depending on the interviewee. They

think of the things they participate in as separate activities rather than a part of a bigger concept that would then be called audience development.

This chapter has been divided into three categories based on Maitland's framework. As mentioned, since the point of view has to be adjusted from an organisational one into the participant's, the focus and wording has been changed accordingly. The first chapter widens the meaning of the artistic dimension into self expression and feelings, as these things were frequently mentioned together in the answers. When it comes to the educational dimension, for the participants it also meant learning, which are both examined more in the second chapter. Since the data is focused on the participants' point of view, monetary marketing value of audience development is out of scope. Thus, the last subchapter looks at marketing value through brand awareness and image amongst the participants.

4.1. Experience and artistic involvement

What can be seen as the artistic dimension from an organisational viewpoint, for the participants came up as experiencing theatre, and being able to participate in creating it. The word experience was something all audience development participants used when describing how they felt about being a part of audience development activities.

CONSUMER	ORGANISATION
co-creation experiencing things yourself, being a part of creating art, belonging to a group, feeling that your artistic opinion matters	artistic allocating time from artists to audience development, facilitating participants in workshops and productions

Figure 6. First dimension: co-creation

For them experience revolved around the artistic aspects of each activity, but was also often about being able to experience and create things themselves as a part of a group when participating in audience development activities (Figure 5).

“[The play] is a totally different experience for someone who has not been here backstage and seen all the things behind the scenes.” - Participant F

Theatre in itself was thought of as an experience, where audience development activities brought in new dimensions and points of view compared to how the interviewees felt about theatre performances before participating.

“For me opening up the creative process helps to get more out of the performance too.” - Participant B

Most interviewees felt a sense of pride or joy in being a part of the creation process for an art piece. Sharing one’s own views of thoughts and somehow seeing those reflected in the final outcome was experienced as rewarding.

“The things I’ve been involved in creating have been very personal. We got to have an effect on the content... There’s so much more in the performance when you have had a chance to have an influence on it.” - Participant C

For some, however, being only a viewer felt safer and more comfortable, and they preferred to take an observer role in the activities. In this case, it was more about getting

more information about the piece through seeing the performers, rather than participating themselves.

“I shun at situations where I would need to participate and be in the spotlight. For me, art where the audience is asked to participate often feels forced.”

- Participant B

Especially activities that involved participants in a theatre piece as a performer, such as the Jakomäki project (table 4), made them feel a strong sense of belonging within the group of participants as well as a sense of pride in themselves. They also associated this feeling with Helsinki City Theatre.

“I’m so proud to be a part of Helsinki City Theatre’s group and to be able to show a different side of me.” - Participant C

When participating in rehearsals, getting to have a say or contributing to what the final outcome would become made them feel important. The sense of belonging is a basic need for people, which can be seen as one reason why filling that need in a new and exciting situation is meaningful for the interviewees.

“You can participate and, in some way, contribute to the art piece being created... Participating is more meaningful than just watching. It is inspiring.” - Participant D

Overall, personal experiences and feelings around it were mentioned by every interviewee. When asked about what were the most memorable things about participating for them, most

described a specific experience around making theatre. For most, the reasoning behind choosing that experience was the way it made them feel, often as a part of a group of people and for many, it was also a learning experience in addition to only watching or doing. The co-creational dimension is closely intertwined with being able to learn new things by doing and experiencing. In conclusion, it could be said that it is valuable for participants to get an experience where they feel they are participating and creating things themselves, but also in control of setting comfortable limits within which to do so.

4.2. Learning and education

The educational dimension from Maitland's framework is very clearly present in the research findings as well, however, from a consumer point of view it was seen more as being able to learn new things and skills. As can be seen in Figure 7, main value for the participants came from being able to see things you would not see as only an audience member in a theatre performance, learning and teaching themselves new skills and gaining more knowledge of theatre overall.

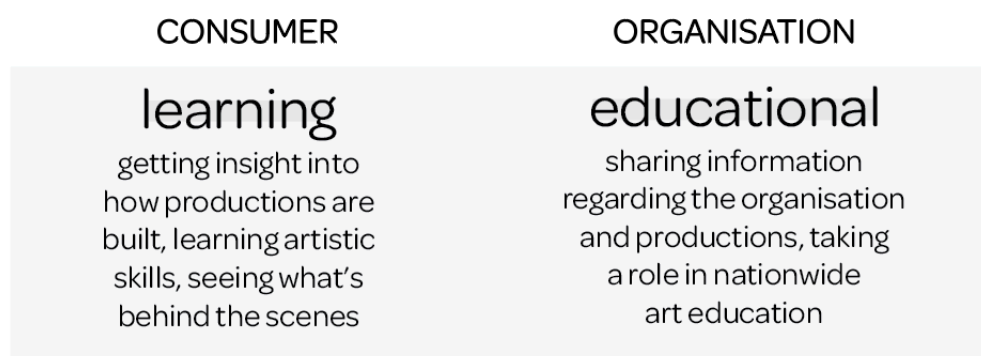


Figure 7. Second dimension: learning

As can be seen from the figure, for organisations, educational activities play an important role nationwide. Supporting art education is also stated as one of the main goals for audience development by both Helsinki City Theatre and Finnish National Opera. For the audience development activity participants involved in the study, the will to learn and points of interest varied a lot depending on the background and type of activity they were participating in. Even when the interviewees understood the concept of learning in a similar way, there were distinct differences among them in for what purposes they want to learn or educate themselves, and how they reflect on what they have learnt so far. Yet, learning or getting to know theatre more closely was a key motivation for most interviewees to participate in audience development overall.

“It is so interesting to see what happens in the background and see what all this actually is... When you go see the performance I will know things like how or where the set has been built.” - Participant A

When observing the theatre tour, it was clear that for some, the most interesting things were related to seeing the backstage of the musical they were going to see soon. Some participants, in contrast, were more interested in specific information, details and numbers about the theatre they were visiting. For them it was an important part of the theatre experience, and one interviewee had especially liked an audience development activity where an informative tour was combined with a dance performance.

“Participating in these kinds of things gives you some background information... You get to know the theatre, get some numeric information and yet it is also a performance at the same time.” - Participant B

One interviewee mentioned they liked going to different theatres to find out facts and information about each, and then to compare them. They were a frequent theatre visitor, so this additional data gave them more insight into the theatre organisations behind each play or art piece.

“It is eye-opening to see how theatres are different yet there are so many similarities in how they create shows.” - Participant B

Detailed information about the art pieces, on the other hand, were used in providing study material for teachers and students involved in the Taidetestaajat project (table 4). The activity was arranged in collaboration with schools to provide children and teachers with cultural experiences and enrich their education. In this case, the sense of learning was very much in the center of the experience for the interviewees. This type of audience development activities can be valuable not only to the direct participants, but for students and people they interact with after the experience.

*“I get to open all this up to my students in a totally different way now I’ve seen it myself. It definitely shows in my work and I can get a lot out of this experience.”
- Participant E*

The interviewees participating in audience development theatre productions also thought of seeing plays as a way to educate themselves.

“I now also go to see plays to study acting.” - Participant D

One of them also felt that by combining doing theatre themselves and going to see plays enabled them to get more out of both. They enjoyed being able to go more into detail when seeing a performance and then using that in their own acting.

“I look at them in a different way since I’ve started with the [Jakomäki] project and focus more on details such as gestures and expressions as well as the props that are used.” - Participant C

One saw participating in audience development and theatre activities as a way of advancing their future career. They wanted to gather as much information as possible about the different positions in a theatre organisation to decide whether they want to pursue a career in it.

*“I have learned so much during this experience... would describe myself more as an observer and learner. I would want to do more myself in the future.”
- Participant F*

Data collected for this thesis indicates that all interviewees felt they learned something from participating in an audience development activity. For some of them, it was the motivation behind deciding to participate in the first place. For others, other value such as being able to participate in creating art was the main driver, yet they felt they had learned new things regardless. When it comes to the word ‘education’, it was mostly mentioned in very concrete cases, for example when the activity was related to school. In summary, it can be stated that learning is an important part of the audience development experience for participants. It is

experienced from the point of view of both the organisation teaching the participants as well as them teaching or learning new skills by themselves.

4.3. Brand relationship

The view on whether audience development has a more business oriented element in it varies between theatre organisations. In Maitland's framework, the marketing dimension clearly represents more of a business perspective. Since the main data collected comes from the point of view of participants and potential audience members, the real financial business value of audience development is out of scope. For consumers, audience development was a way to get to know the theatre organisation and brand better, and interacting with it (Figure 8).

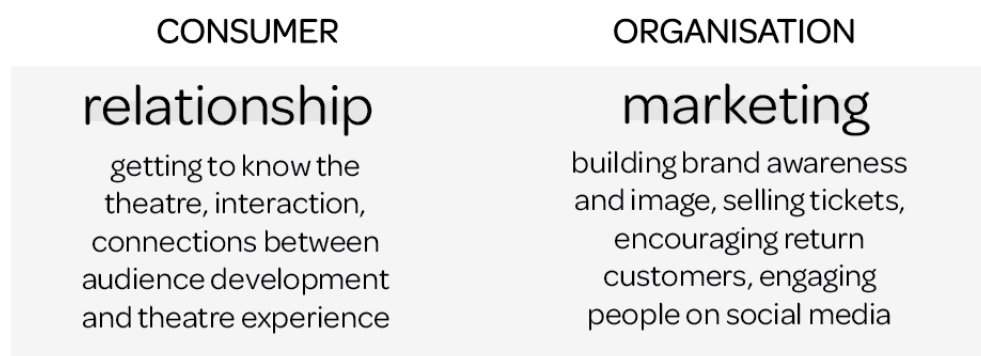


Figure 8. Third dimension: brand relationship

As seen in the above figure, the data indicates that the participants appreciate interaction between Helsinki City Theatre, themselves and other participants. As previously mentioned, the interviewees associated their feelings and experience with Helsinki City Theatre, not only the project or specific activity they were involved with. For them, being able to participate was also building a relationship between the HCT brand and themselves.

“HCT provides you with experiences and valuable, devoted moments.”

- Participant D

During the interviews when going deeper into how the interviewees would describe the relationship, they answered in very similar ways. There seemed to be enthusiasm in being a part of Helsinki City Theatre’s community, but also a certain hesitance as to whether they were “important enough” for that.

“We are good friends but still getting to know each other.” - Participant D

The theatre organisation was seen as something big and influential, and many interviewees analysed their importance through their level of skills or knowledge. There seemed to be a certain barrier to thinking that they have ownership in the HCT brand, although it was clear that they would have liked to think of themselves in that way.

“I’d say, or at least want to say that we are friends but not in contact every day.

Like friends from a bit further away that meet every now and then.” - Participant F

One interviewee did not feel any ownership towards Helsinki City Theatre when asked. However, they still described the relationship as being friends.

“I do not feel like I’m an owner of Helsinki City Theatre. I’m just a part of our group [of participants].” - Participant D

One important aspect for theatres, according to theory, is selling more tickets to plays by organising audience development activities. An interviewee mentioned that participating in the activities makes them more eager to go see the play as well. This supports the theory by Alfieri et al. (2011), that building relationships with consumers through audience development can result in them buying tickets more frequently.

“Seeing the rehearsal makes me excited to go see the play when it is ready.” -

Participant F

Another interviewee even mentioned the possibility of charging a ticket fee for audience development activities such as theatre tours or open rehearsals. This is actually something the Finnish National Opera already does, as for them those activities are categorized as marketing rather than audience development.

“They could sell like 5 euro tickets to see how the pieces come together.”

- Participant B

Social responsibility and access to art is also something both Helsinki City Theatre and Finnish National Opera mentioned as a very important part of their brand image. Several interviewees also mentioned being able to experience arts more now that they are a part of an audience development project. As the key goal of that for them is making art more accessible for people, these two things are partly contradicting each other.

“Through my theatre hobby I’ve been able to see theatre at a lower cost and I’ve

been there quite often... If I need to buy the whole ticket myself it would probably limit me to go only once a year.” - Participant D

Compared to the other two dimensions, brand value is more difficult to define. The participants do think of their relationship with Helsinki City Theatre in a friendly way, but it is hard to determine whether that was changed compared to what their feeling was before participating. Most interviewees did not see HCT in a different light compared to other Finnish Theatre organisations. Overall, based on the data, brand in itself does not provide value to the customers, but it can influence how the participants perceive the organisation. Being able to interact with the brand in a way that feels meaningful for themselves creates value and is important for audience development participants.

4.4. New framework for audience development value

In addition to the figure comparing Maitland’s dimensions with the ones based on the study, the findings of this research are summarised in Figure 9 from a more contextual perspective. It shows how audience development is connected to the traditional theatre experience, and how the value created through audience development flows between the organisation and the consumer in various ways within an organisation in the cultural industries. In this case the concept of theatre experience is used to describe the traditional one-way culture experience where an audience member is there only as a viewer. The feeling of belonging and participating in art creation as been summarised as co-creation.

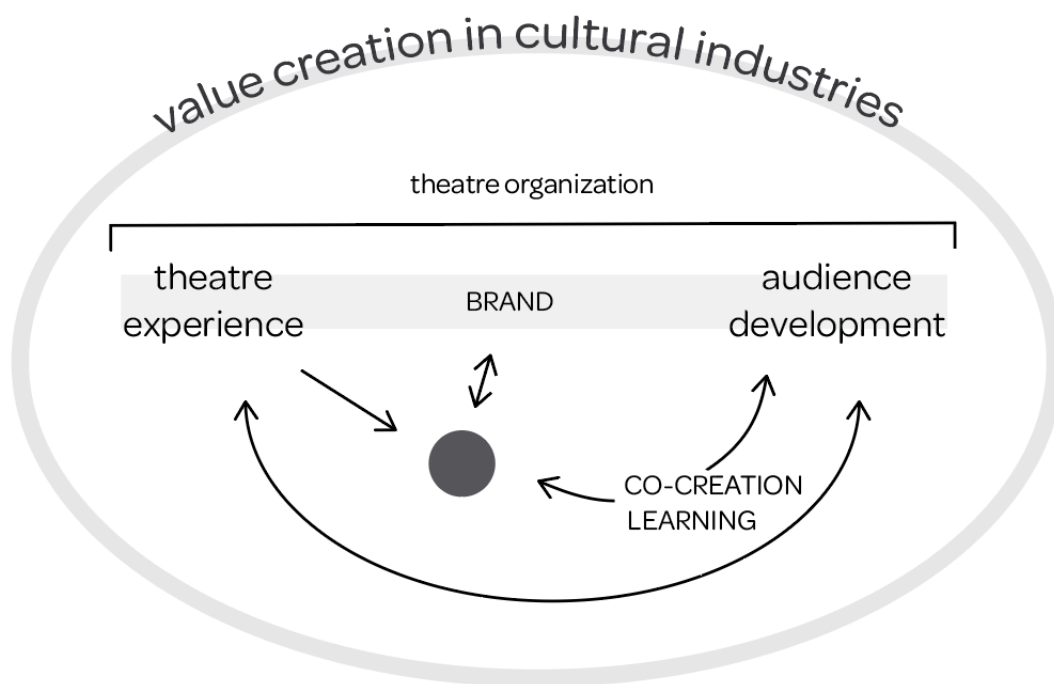


Figure 9. Audience development in a value creation context

Audience development generates value to participants through co-creation experiences, learning and brand relationship. The first two are transmitted to the participant or consumer directly from audience development activities, but also indirectly by providing added value to the traditional theatre experience. All of these have an impact on the brand of the organisation in question, which then again affects the relationship between the participant and the organisation. Building and nurturing this relationship is valuable for most participants, and they are eager to feel even closer to the theatre organisation.

Value creation between the theatre organisation and a participant is a two-way interaction, although many theories describe it strictly from an organisational point of view. The three dimensions, modified from Maitland's framework into co-creation, learning and brand, can be identified even though they are intertwined and all of them are not always present.

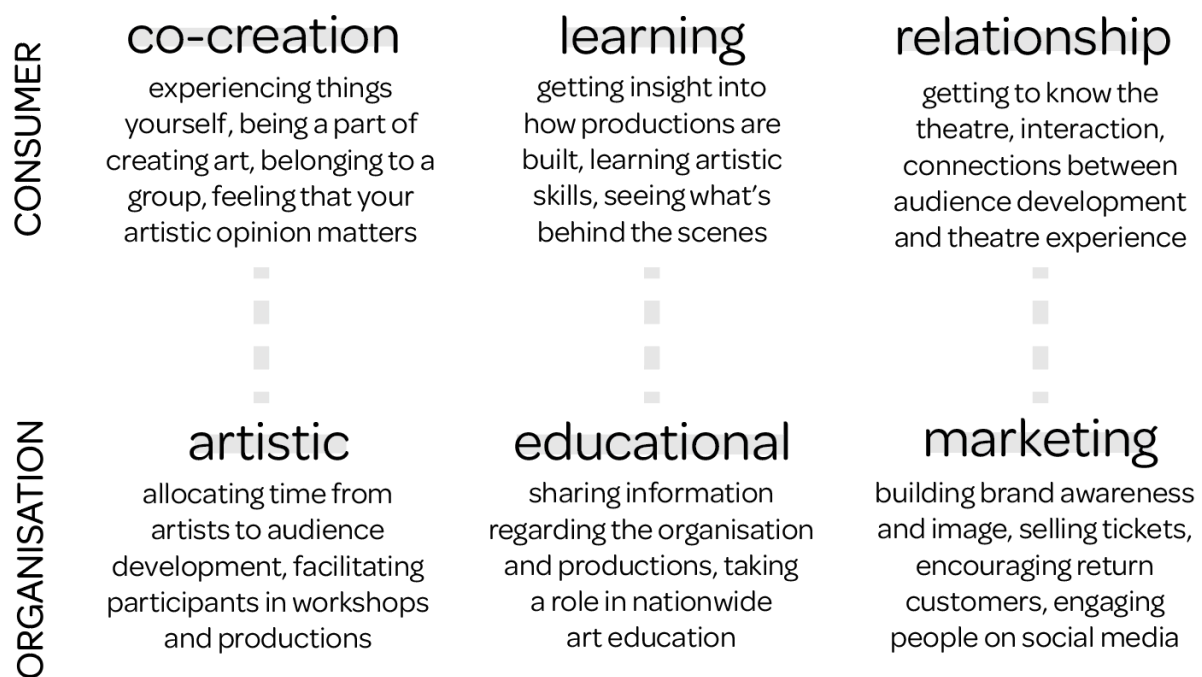


Figure 10. Value in audience development

All of these interactions shape the experience the consumer has of theatre and, in a wider context, culture. Maitland's (1997) statement that audience development enhances and broadens an individual's experiences of the arts goes well together with the results of the study. The interviewees all mentioned ways in which participating in audience development enriches their overall experience of culture.

As presented in the beginning of this chapter, Maitland's framework and the study findings can be combined into a comparative figure. The main difference between the old and new framework is that the former looks at value from an organisational point of view, whereas in the latter the value is presented from both perspectives. Figure 10 presents three important dimensions of value and how they compare to each other from an organisational and a consumer point of view.

Based on the findings it can be concluded that the value audience development creates for consumers has elements that connect it to other frameworks and concepts. From a wider point of view it can be stated that while there were certain differences between how each participant experienced the three dimensions and which ones were emphasized, all of them were somehow present for each interviewee.

4.5. Summary of Findings

Audience development creates value for participants through co-creation, learning and building a relationship with the theatre organisation. Personal experiences and feelings around it were mentioned by every interviewee, and the sense of belonging and participation was important for them. Participants felt they learned new things from participating in an audience development activity. For some, learning was the main reason behind participating whereas for some, a secondary value. Some interviewees also associated their feelings and experience with the theatre organisation, not only the project or specific activity they were involved with. They were able to describe their relationship with the brand, and it was mostly positive. For some participants, however, the organisation behind the activities was not important, and they were more focused on the project they were in.

The value created through audience development also affects how these consumers feel about the theatre experience. Many interviewees mentioned that learning about theatre production and participating through co-creation made them get more out of the show or play when they went to see it. Some also said the fact that they participated in audience development makes them more likely to go see a play in the future.

Looking at audience development from an organisational point of view focuses on giving or producing value for the customers. However, for the participants the feeling that they are contributing in a two-way co-creational relationship is very important. For consumers, the experience of value creation in cultural industries does not consist of separate blocks or activities, but things that affect each other and together contribute to the overall experience of theatre and culture. Audience development widens and strengthens the participants' understanding and involvement in culture and theatre.

Overall, the research findings can be categorised into three main dimensions that together, intertwined within each other, represent the value created for consumers through audience development: co-creation, learning and brand relationship. The following chapter aims to further understand these findings and to get a more holistic view on them by examining them together with existing theory and literature and discussing the possible implications.

5. Discussion of findings

The purpose of this study was to examine value creation in audience development from a consumer point of view with the following research questions:

1. What value does participating in audience development activities create for consumers?
2. How does this value correspond to the value created from an organisational point of view?

Both the literature review and the research itself were conducted from the basis of understanding these two viewpoints: consumer and organisation. Since there is currently a research gap in understanding the consumer point of view, the literature review section concentrated on understanding audience development as a phenomenon and why theatres started it in the first place. Theories regarding engagement and co-creation were also

examined. In the following chapters, the research findings will be compared to already existing research reviewed in the beginning of the thesis.

5.1. Expanding the experience of theatre

When it comes to the reasoning behind audience development, there are a lot of different approaches into why it is something theatres should do. One important aspect for theatres, according to theory (Alfieri et al., 2011; Hayes & Slater, 2002), is selling more tickets to plays by organising audience development activities. Interview data supports the theory by Alfieri et al. (2011), that building relationships with consumers through audience development can result in them buying tickets more frequently. As one interviewee mentioned, “Seeing the rehearsal makes me excited to go see the play when it is ready.” TINFO (2018) also stated that audience development lowers the barrier for people to participate in theatre performances.

According to TINFO (2018) the sense of participation created by audience development activities strengthens and validates the existence of theatre in the minds of the citizens. This can be also seen from the research findings, as sense of belonging and participation was a valuable reason to participate in audience development according to the interviewees. Scollen’s (2009) description of audience development as a planned process that enables and broadens a consumer’s experiences of the arts goes well together with the experiences interviewees have had, for example with the statement from Participant B: “For me opening up the creative process helps to get more out of the performance too.” Audience development together with the traditional theatre experience form an entity of cultural experiences for consumers.

5.2. The benefits of audience development

When it comes to concrete benefits or value from audience development, existing theory focuses a lot on building a customer relationship. Both Alfieri et al. (2011) and Hayes and Slater (2002) mention converting single-ticket buyers into loyal customers as one of the main goals for audience development. When talking to the two Finnish theatre organisations, similar business oriented goals were not as important for them. From the research findings, however, we can see that participating in audience development activities does contribute in building a relationship between the brand and the consumer. Several interviewees described their relationship to HCT as someone they want to get to know better or get closer to, indicating that the experience had sparked a growing interest in the organisation and brand. This can be seen as building brand value and a relationship and thus to support theory. To determine whether participating in audience development makes the participant favor the organising theatre more than others, more research would need to be conducted.

When discussing with different theatre organisations, it was clear that audience development can be seen as a combination of education as well as, growing the audience, like in Helsinki City Theatre, but also as a totally separate department with no business goals attached to it, like in the Finnish National Opera. For both organisations, the social responsibility aspect in audience development was emphasised a lot. Bardy et al. (2007) as well as Juntunen (2013) see art and culture as something that increases the general wellbeing of people. This did not come up in the research findings directly, even though several interviewees did mention it having a significant positive impact on their life. Even the Finnish government considers their responsibility to provide art experiences to as many people as possible (TINFO 2018). The research findings also showed that for many interviewees being able to participate in audience development had increased their possibilities to engage with culture and arts.

As one interviewee stated, “Through my theatre hobby I’ve been able to see theatre at a lower cost and I’ve been there quite often... If I need to buy the whole ticket myself it would probably limit me to go only once a year.” For one interviewee, participating in the activity gave them the chance to see a play for the second time in their life. These theories and research findings support each other in stating that one benefit of audience development is making art more accessible.

When thinking about the two aforementioned benefits, loyal customers and social responsibility, there is also a conflict between the two. The people audience development makes theatre more accessible to are not necessarily the ones who would be financially able to become a frequent theatre visitor. Since in Finland the government is very involved in funding audience development activities, the social responsibility side is more emphasised in the target audiences audience development is planned for, such as kids and people living in lower income areas. Foreign studies and theories seem to focus more on the financial benefit from an organisational point of view, whereas Finnish sources give more emphasis on the societal value from everyone having access to culture and theatre. From the interviewees, everyone was in a situation where without having a relationship with theatre organisations through audience development, they would not be able to go see theatre performances on a regular basis, mostly for socioeconomical reasons.

5.3. The value lies in co-creation?

Even though there are not a lot of studies yet examining audience development from a co-creational point of view, some pivotal co-creation theories were reviewed as a basis for the study. Research findings clearly state, that for the consumers, one main value they gain from participating in audience development activities is the ability to participate in creating

theatre. As one of the interviewees mentioned, “participating is more meaningful than just watching. It is inspiring.”

Gouillart and Ramaswamy’s (2010) figure describing the main elements in co-creation can be utilised in describing audience development from a co-creational perspective too. The main element examined in the findings were the new experiences of value audience development produces for consumers, and the specific audience development activities observed acted as engagement platforms, enabling the interaction. Lower risks and costs for consumers in this case resulted in the ability to join theatre activities more often than they would otherwise be able to do.

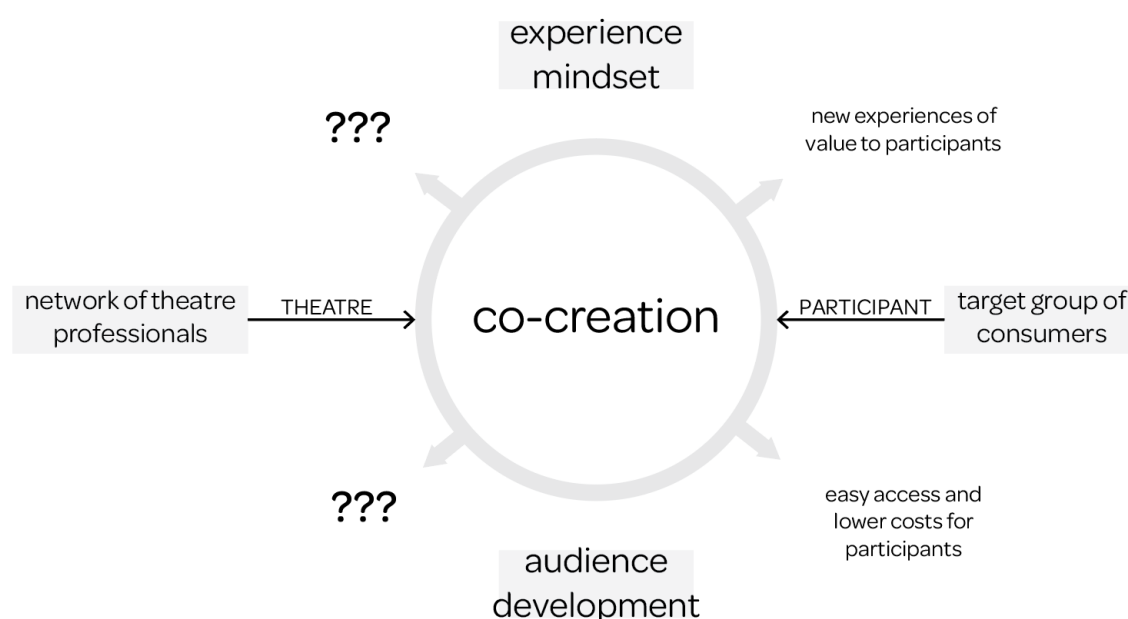


Figure 11. The process of co-creation in audience development

From the theatre’s point of view however, the aspects co-creational framework is not as clearly known, as can be seen in the figure represented by the question marks. It seems that theatre organisations still think of themselves as the enabler who gives experiences and value to the participants, rather than thinking an recognising the actual resources, lower cost

and value they could also be gaining from the equation. Even though the research findings indicate its clear co-creation is valuable for consumers, there is still some way to go before co-creation will become a thought of, integral part of audience development from both sides.

Even though the findings indicate that for consumers, the feeling of co-creation is one of the most important values they gain from participating in audience development, the organisational side is not yet in the same stage. Based on observation and the data gathered from speaking to the theatre organisations, they do not use the co-creational capital to their advantage as consciously as they could be. For theatre organisations, audience development still seems to be something they offer for consumers, rather than there being something consumers actually offer for them as well. Since this study did not explicitly focus on the organisational point of view, however, this matter should be researched further to gain more insight into that side of the equation.

5.4. The missing value of learning

One key value consumers gain from participating in audience development according to the research findings is learning and education. From the three main aspects, co-creation and relationship building are mentioned frequently within existing literature, but the educational aspect is something most sources do not seem to recognise. The only literary source emphasising it is Maitland's (1997) framework, that was also used as a basis for interpreting the findings. This is interesting, as based on the research findings, this aspect seems to be the part that is most concretely connected to a certain theatre performance or organisation. According to the interviewees, knowing more about a performance than what you see from the audience makes the whole experience more interesting for them. Also, doing theatre

activities by themselves allows them to use the traditional theatre experience as a way of enjoying as well as studying at the same time.

In Finland, the importance of art education is present since the Ministry of Culture and Education already combines the two aspects in their work. When it comes to theories examining the benefits of audience development from an organisational point of view, providing learning experiences is not present. This study provides new insight into how learning and teaching provides value to the consumer, and thus could also be utilised to increase the value of audience development from an organisational point of view. Since there is a lack of existing theory into this matter, it would be a great topic for additional future research.

5.5. Concluding the discussion

The findings of this study support existing literature in many aspects, for example in stating that audience development broadens experiences of the arts for consumers. The main value for organisations, building customer relationships and loyal customers, is also visible in the new framework from the consumer side, as the brand relationship dimension. These things confirm that organisations and consumers do view audience development in very similar ways.

However, there are some aspects that are not yet taken into account in organisational theory about audience development. Learning was one of the key values for consumers according to the research findings but is not given much emphasis especially in studies conducted outside of Finland. Also, although co-creation is a way for the consumers to emerge themselves into the theatre experience, there is little theory supporting the process from

specifically a theatre organisation's point of view. Overall, the findings of this study provide an additional viewpoint to audience development, which is important since it is an interactive way of doing theatre in the first place. Additionally, the findings help in pointing out a few key aspects that are not yet present in existing theories about audience development, such as learning and co-creation.

6. Conclusions

Culture is an important part of our society, but many cultural organisations depend on different subsidies in being able to operate the way they do. To validate that all citizens are benefitting from these kinds of investments, the public sector organisations behind the subsidies encourage cultural organisations to do audience development – a way for people to emerge deeper into culture and experience cultural activities from different points of view.

The research questions for this study were as follows:

1. What value does participating in audience development activities create for consumers?
2. How does this value correspond to the value created from an organisational point of view?

This study examines the role of audience development from a value creation point of view and tries to understand what kind of role it plays in building a consumer experience in the theatre industry. Although audience development in itself is a well known field in cultural and theatre organisations, there is little data and research about the motivations behind it. Most existing research focuses on an organisational point of view, and examines the ways in which audience development creates additional value for culture organisations. On a managerial level, the aim of the study was to provide insight for theatre organisations by helping them understand the value for consumers and get the most out of their investment into audience development.

6.1. Theoretical contributions

Both existing literature and the findings of this study show that audience development can open up and deepen the traditional theatre experience towards a consumer. Audience development together with the traditional theatre experience form an entity of cultural experiences for consumers. Scollen (2009) and TINFO (2018) both explain audience development in a similar way than the findings of the study, where opening up the creative process through means of audience development helps the consumer to get more out of the theatre performance itself.

Existing theories (Alfieri et al. 2011 and Hayes, Slater 2002) focus a lot on audience development being a way to convert single-ticket buyers into loyal customers for theatre organisations. Statements included in research findings indicate that audience development participants might be more likely to want to buy a ticket to a theatre performances. However, this contradicts with the main target group for audience development, at least in Finland. Participants mostly being from certain socioeconomic groups that might not have the

financial means to be a frequent theatre goer, it might be difficult to justify these theories as a purpose for doing audience development. In Finland, audience development seems to be practised more from a social responsibility point of view, where financial or business goals are not as important as the amount of people engaged, for example. Existing literature and the research findings support each other in stating that one benefit of audience development is making art more accessible (TINFO, 2018).

Research findings clearly state that for the consumers one main value they gain from participating in audience development activities is co-creation. Based on research findings however, theatre organisations do not consciously use the co-creational capital to their advantage. Even though the main elements in co-creation can be utilised in describing audience development from a co-creational perspective, the big picture still has a lot of room for development and further research.

Overall research findings brought much needed insight into existing theory from a consumer point of view. Even though most existing literature focuses on the organisational perspective, there are a lot of similarities in the theory and findings of this study. The benefit of audience development still has some contradicting viewpoints between whether it should be focusing on generating value with an emphasis on the consumer, or also provide business value to the organisation itself.

6.2. Managerial implications

The findings of this study provide certain implications for theatre organisations when assessing the value they are creating for consumers through audience development. The findings can also be applied to other cultural sectors, but it is important to be aware of the

possible differences between different fields. For example, different types of activities might change the type of value that is created, or an organisation from a different field might have a different audience or participant group demographics. The main dimensions in which audience development creates value are learning, co-creation and brand relationship. It is especially important to note that all these dimensions also affect the participants' traditional theatre experiences. The combination of audience development with theatre experiences is something theatre organisations can really utilise when planning both aspects of their operations.

Since the co-creational aspect in audience development is very important for participants, organisations should further develop the way they utilise that interaction. Currently, even though consumers think of the experience as co-creational, theatre organisations do not necessarily think about it the same way. For them, the interaction is more one-way, and they do not necessarily value the content produced on a same level than their own operations. Theatre organisations should put more effort into thinking about how they can actually utilise co-creation to not only provide additional value to consumers, but to also create co-creational value for themselves, like increased strategic capital, lower barrier and risks for testing new things (Gouillart & Ramaswamy, 2010).

Even though for theatre organisations in Finland audience development is more social responsibility than an attempt to boost their business, there is room to include both aspects into the equation. There seems to still be a way of thinking where business and art cannot go together and that an arts organisation aiming for business success is thought of in a negative light. Based on the research findings, however, participating in audience development activities seems to increase consumers' interest to go and see more performances, for example. The participants do not experience this as being negative or too

direct, but are excited to widen their experience around theatre. Since currently the main target group for audience development in Finland is one that might be socioeconomically unable to pay for theatre, theatre organisations could consider widening the target group and dedicating some of their resources into providing audience development experiences to other socioeconomic and age groups as well.

6.3. Limitations of the study

As this study has been conducted as a case study the method in itself has some limitations, the most important one being its dependency on the context in which the research has been conducted in as well as lack of generalisability. Because of this limitation, it becomes very important to look into suggestions for future research and looking into the same subject in a wider context. Suggestions will be provided in the next chapter. Since the study was conducted in Finland and by studying audience development activities from one main organisation, the findings are not necessarily applicable nationwide or globally.

When it comes to observation, even though it provides valuable background information into the interview situations, the data collected is always from a subjective point of view of the researcher. To avoid transferring my own possible biases into the findings, I focused on behaviour and other factors as they can be seen, not in terms of how they translate to me as the observer. To avoid biases affecting the findings of the study, observation data has also not been used as the main source when doing the final analysis. The other research method used in this study, semi-structured interviews, also have certain limitations. Since an interview includes dialogue between the researcher and the interviewee, it is inevitable that the different parties influence each other. Even though interviews can be recorded in an objective way as audio, possible biases or subjective views as well as lack of understanding

between the two parties can be seen as limitations of the study. It is also possible that the interviewees themselves remember or assess something incorrectly. To avoid this, the interviews were conducted right after each audience development activity so that the memories and ideas would be fresh in the interviewees' minds.

The participants interviewed for this study were provided by Helsinki City Theatre, and the interview situations organised by them. There were also only six interviews conducted. These things can be seen as limitations, since it is hard to make sure the interviewees would represent all audience development activity participants equally. To make the research context as wide as possible, the Finnish National Opera was also included in the background information interviews for the study, the activities observed were all different from each other, and the participants interviewed were from different ages and backgrounds.

6.4. Future research

This study provides insight into what value audience development creates from the consumer point of view, and how that value is connected to specific types of audience development activities. It also looks at how people connect that value to the traditional theatre experience, and how they affect the way the consumer feels about theatre. Since the existing studies regarding audience development focus a lot on either an organisational or a business point of view, future research could deepen the understanding of the consumer perspective in this equation. For example, it would be interesting to study further, how participating in audience development activities affects consumer behavior regarding how often they go see theatre performances.

Currently, even though consumers think of the experience as co-creational, the theatre organisations do not necessarily think about it the same way. For theatre organisations, audience development still seems to be something they offer for consumers, rather than there being something consumers actually offer for them as well. Since this study did not focus on the organisational point of view, this topic could be researched further to gain more insight into the organisation's side of the co-creational equation.

Since learning is one of the main dimensions when categorising the values gathered from the data, that would also be an interesting topic to do future research on. This is also important since existing theory does not provide a lot of insight into it as an aspect of audience development. A lot of the audience development activities are partly or completely directed towards children, and it would be valuable to follow and study how these kids then grow into culture consumers as adults. Both the state and culture organisations in Finland put a lot of resources into audience development projects and cultural education. Looking into how this kind of activities possibly add to the already high-quality education in Finland could provide valuable learning also in the educational field.

This study is focused on looking at value created by audience development in theatre organisation. However, in Finland, most culture organisations in other fields also do audience development. Thus, future research should also be conducted in the context of other cultural sectors. It would be very interesting to compare those results with the ones from this study to know more about whether the findings presented in this study could be applied more widely. Research in different contexts like this would provide a deeper understanding of people as consumers of culture.

References

ALFIERI, T., DALTON, A., FIELD, A. and HARLOW, B., 2011. *Building deeper relationships: How Steppenwolf Theatre Company is turning single-ticket buyers into repeat visitors*, Bob Harlow Research and Consulting, Llc.

BAKKER, R., CRAENMEHR, S., HOLWERDA, R., MENIJN, M., VAN TURNHOUT, K. AND ZWART, J., 2013. Tradeoffs in design research: Development oriented triangulation, [Online]. Available: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/262350359_Tradeoffs_in_Design_Research_Development_Oriented_Triangulation [May 2017].

BARDY, M., HAAPALAINEN, R., ISOTALO, M. & KORHONEN, P., 2007. *Taide keskellä elämää - nykytaiteen museo Kiasman julkaisuja*. Helsinki: LIKE.

BOOTH, N. AND MATIC, J. A., 2011. *Mapping and leveraging influencers in social media to shape corporate brand perceptions*, *Corporate Communications: An International Journal*, 16(3), pp. 184-191.

BRODIE, R., HOLLEBEEK, L., JURIC, B., & ILIC, A., 2011. Customer engagement: Conceptual domain, fundamental propositions, and implications for research. *Journal of Service Research*, 14(3), 252–271.

CARR, R., RADBOURNE, J., RENTSCHLER, R. and RICKARD, J., 2001. Relationship marketing, audience retention and performing arts organisation viability. *International journal of non-profit and voluntary sector marketing*, 7(2), pp. 118-130.

DENZIN, N., & LINCOLN, Y., 2003. Introduction: The discipline and practice of qualitative research. In N. Denzin, & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *Strategies of qualitative inquiry*. California: SAGE Publications.

DUDOVSKIY, J., 2018. *The Ultimate Guide to Writing a Dissertation in Business Studies*, Research-Methodology.net

ERIKSSON, P. & KOVALAINEN, A., 2008. *Qualitative methods in business research*. SAGE Publications Ltd: London.

EUROPEAN COMMISSION, 2015. Study on Audience Development How to place audiences at the centre of cultural organisations, [Online]. Available: https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/sites/creative-europe/files/documents/news/audience-development-study-glossary_en.pdf [Dec 2018].

FERNANDES, T. and REMELHE, P., 2016. How to engage customers in co-creation: customers' motivations for collaborative innovation. *Journal of strategic marketing*, 24(3-4), pp. 311-326.

GOUILLART, F. J. and RAMASWAMY, V., 2010. *The power of co-creation: Build it with them to boost growth, productivity and profits*, Simon and Schuster.

HANSEN, L. E. and LINDELOF, A. M., 2015. Talking about theatre: Audience development through dialogue. *Participations: Journal of audience and reception studies*, 12(1).

HARS, A., AND OU, S., 2002. Working for free? Motivations for participating in open-source projects. *International Journal of Electronic Commerce*, 6(3), 25–39.

HAYES, D. and Slater, A., 2002. 'Rethinking the missionary position' – the quest for sustainable audience development strategies. *Managing leisure*, 7(1), pp. 1-17.

HEARN, G. and PACE, C., 2006. *Value-creating ecologies: understanding next generation business systems*. *Foresight*, 8(1), pp. 55-65.

HELSINGIN KAUPUNGINTEATTERI, 2018. Vuosikertomus, [Online], Available: <https://hkt.fi/julkaisut/vuosikertomus/#/article/2/page/1-1> [Aug 2019]

HOLLEBEEK, L., GLYNN, M., and BRODIE, R., 2014. Consumer brand engagement in social media: Conceptualization, scale development and validation. *Journal of Interactive Marketing*, 28, pp. 149–165.

HOLLIDAY, A., 2007. *Doing & Writing Qualitative Research (Second Edition)*, SAGE Publications Ltd.

HUDSON, L.A. and OZANNE, J.L., 1988. Alternative ways of seeking knowledge in consumer research. *Journal of consumer research*, 14(4), pp. 508-521.

JUNTUNEN, N., 2013. Yleisötyö suomalaisessa ammattiteatterissa – toteutus, tavoitteet ja tulevaisuus, [Online]. Available: www.theseus.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/59438/juntunen_ninni.pdf?sequence=1 [May 2017].

KARKKULAINEN, M., 2011. *Siivet selkään, draamakengät jalkaan – Kohtaamisia draaman pedagogisilla näyttämöillä*. Helsinki: Tmi Raija Airaksinen.

KPMG LLP, 2015. Keeping up with the pace of change, [Online]. Available: <https://assets.kpmg.com/content/dam/kpmg/pdf/2015/05/Demands-by-Customers-Are-Driving-the-Life-and-Annuity-Agenda.pdf> [Mar 2017].

LeCOMPTE, M, SCHENSUL, J. and SCHENSUL, S., 1999. *Essential ethnographic methods*, Walnut Creek: AltaMira Press.

LEMON, K. and VERHOEF, P., 2016. Understanding Customer Experience Throughout the Customer Journey. *Journal of Marketing: AMA/MSI Special Issue*, pp. 76–68.

MAITLAND, H., 1997. *A Guide to Audience Development*. London: Arts Council of England Touring Department.

NAMBISAN, S., & BARON, A., 2009. Virtual customer environments: Testing a model of voluntary participation in value co-creation activities. *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, 26(4), pp. 388–406.

NEA, 2009. *2008 Survey of Public Participation in the Arts*. Washington D.C.: National Endowment of the Arts.

NEUVONEN, M., 2017. Interview. Meeting about audience development. In person. 4.5.2017.

OOPPERA BALETTI, 2018. Vuosikertomus 2018, [Online], Available: https://oopperabaletti.fi/app/uploads/2019/04/Ooppera_VSK_2018_www-1.pdf [Aug 2019]

OZCAN, K. and RAMASWAMY, V., 2014. *The co-creation paradigm*, Stanford: Stanford University Press.

PFROMMER, P. and TORREGGIANI, A., 2014. *Guide to audience development planning*, London: The Audience Agency.

RADBOURNE, J., GLOW, H., and JOHANSON, K., 2010. *Measuring the intrinsic benefits of arts attendance*. *Cultural Trends*, 19(4), pp. 307–324.

RAMASWAMY, V., 2009. *Leading the transformation to co-creation of value*. *Strategy & Leadership*, 37(2), pp.32-37.

ROGERS, R., 1998. *Audience development, collaborations between education and marketing*, London: Arts Council of England.

SCHAU, H., MUÑIZ, A., and ARNOULD, E., 2009. How brand community practices create value. *Journal of Marketing*, 73, pp. 30–51.

SCOLLEN, R., 2009. Talking Theatre Is More Than a Test Drive: Two Audience Development Methodologies Under Review. *International Journal of Arts Management*, 12(1), pp. 4-13.

SCOLLEN, R., 2008. Regional voices talk theatre: audience development for the performing arts. *International Journal of Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Marketing*, 13(1), pp. 45-46.

STAKE, R., 2003. *Case studies in: Denzin N. and Lincoln, Y. (Ed.). Strategies of qualitative inquiry*, pp. 134-164.

SUONSYRJÄ, S., 2007. *IN THE SEARCH OF AUDIENCE: Ideas and Practises of Audience Development in the Regional Dance Centers in Finland*. Helsinki: Sibelius Academy.

TUOMI, J. and SARAJÄRVI, A., 2002. *Laadullinen tutkimus ja sisällönanalyysi*. Tammi.

TINFO: TEATTERIN TIEDOTUSKESKUS, 2018. 2017 Finnish Theatre Statistics, [Online]. Available: <https://www.tinfo.fi/documents/teatteritilastot2017>.

TUTKIVAN TEATTERITYÖN KESKUS, 2010. Mitä yleisötyöllä tarkoitetaan?, [Online]. Available: <http://www.yleisotyo.fi/index.php?page=mitae> [May 2017].

VARGO, S. and LUSCH, R., 2004. Evolving to a New Dominant Logic for Marketing. *Journal of Marketing*, 68, pp. 1–17.

WELCH, A., 2012. Collaboration and co-creation for brand innovation, [Online]. Available: <http://wpp.com/wpp/marketing/branding/collaboration-and-cocreation-brand-innovation/> [Mar 2017].

WINSOR, J., 2010. *Flipped: How bottom-up co-creation is replacing top-down innovation*, Chigago: Agate Publishing Inc.

YIN, R., 2012. *Application of case study research* 3rd ed.